Villar wife now richest solon; Beltran still poorest

STORY ON PAGE A21

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John O won't let FVR off the hook

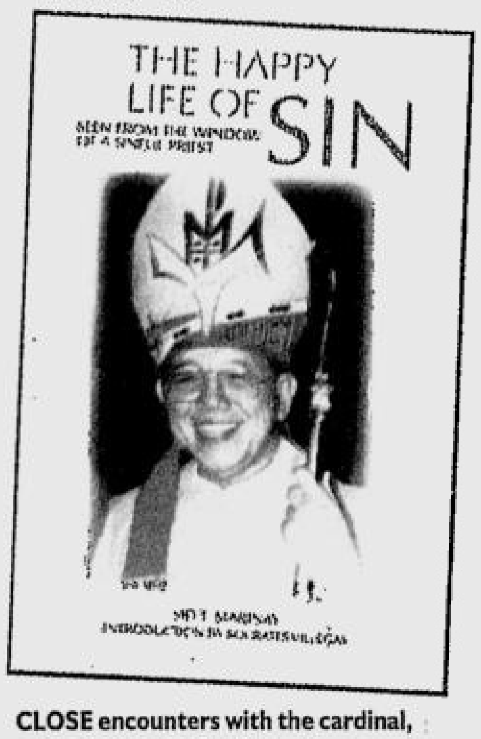
By Rocky Nazareno, *in Manila*
and Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

SEN. John Osmeña is still in a fighting mood with former President Fidel V. Ramos on the guaranteed contracts entered into with independent power producers (IPPs) during his administration.

JOHN/ A4

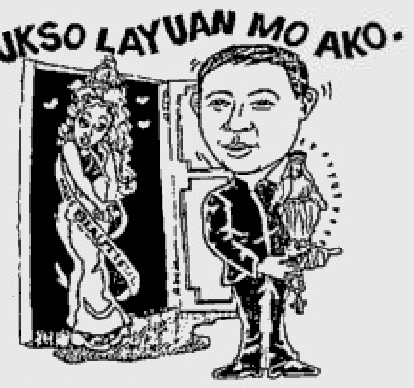
WHAT'S INSIDE

- **BSP warns banks on credit card rates**
  BUSINESS / B1
- **Prosecutor, 4 others hurt in Abra ambush**
  NEWS/ A3



CLOSE encounters with the cardinal, according to the book's author.

The two temptations of Cardinal Sin



"NOT without love," illustration from the book.

By Armand N. Nocum

"I AM too tired tonight, we will do it tomorrow."

This was not a wife's dispirited muttering to fend off an amorous husband, but the reply of the young Jaime Sin, then only a few years into the priesthood, to a teenager who wanted to sleep with him.

In a book titled "The Happy Life of Sin," author Fr. Sid Marinay writes of how Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin hurdled two major temptations when he was in his late 20s and early 30s, and how all these served to strengthen his resolve to keep his vow of celibacy.

Years later, Sin would give this advice to seminarians and priests beset with strong sexual urges: "Take a cold shower, or if that does not work, use White Flower."

Marinay, whose 263-page book subtitled "Seen from the Window of a Sinful Priest" was launched last May 14, said Sin did not go into detail on how the popular "embrocation" or liniment should be used.

"But I presume we priests all understand this advice because we usually laugh nervously," said Marinay, 33, parish priest of San Roque in Sampaloc, Manila, and a magna cum laude graduate in sacred theology and master's degree holder in Oriental religions and cultures at the University of Sto. Tomas.

A synopsis of the book describes it as "non-linear, repetitive, ahistorical, logic-denying, contradiction-embrac-

THE TWO/ A21

'Dangerous' terms in accords rejected

MOBBED: A welcoming throng for President Macapagal from the participants in the symposium on Asia and Japan in the 21st century proposals by female leaders on Thursday. The President is scheduled to return today from her five-day working visit in Japan.

JERRY CARUAL/MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Solons cite granting of police powers

By Juliet Javellana
in Manila
and Charlie C. Señase
PDI Mindanao Bureau

"VERY dangerous" provisions, congressmen yesterday noted as they continued to reject the "interim" agreements signed by backdoor negotiator Norberto Gonzales with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front early this month.

"The Philippines cannot live with these agreements," Zamboanga City Rep. Celso Lobregat said. "Instead of being an instrument of peace, these agreements will be an instrument of war."

Lobregat said that, unlike previous agreements with the Moro National Liberation Front, the agreements Gonzales signed with the MILF in Malaysia on May 6 and 7 did not mention the Constitution as the framework for the agreements.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr., chair of the House defense committee investigating the GRP-MILF peace accords, said that these "interim agreements" should not be enforced because they contained "very danger-

DANGEROUS/ A20

Why would gov't let MILF disburse funds?

By Manny Piñol
Governor of Cotabato

Editor's note: Yesterday, Governor Piñol wrote on the possibly adverse implications of the GRP-MILF joint communiqué of May 6. Today, in his conclusion, he discusses his concerns about the implementing guidelines.

COMMENTARY

THE GOVERNMENT succeeded in stabilizing the security situation in Southern Mindanao by confronting the growing Moro Islamic Liberation Front threat in 1999 and 2000, but it was roundly beaten at the negotiating table in 2002.

The second agreement, signed May 7 in Putrajaya, Malaysia, by Presidential Adviser on Special Concerns Norberto Gonzales and innocently titled "Implementing Guidelines on the Humanitarian, Rehabilitation and Development Aspects of the GRP-MILF Tripoli Agreement on Peace of 2001," attempts to hide its real intention by citing respect for human rights as its foundation. But the attempt fails when the agreement discusses Article V, which is actually all about money.

Article V, the raison d'etre of the whole document, reads:

"To pave the way for the immediate return of evacuees to their places of origin and for their relief and rehabilitation, and in the implementation of relief, rehabilitation and development projects in areas affected by the conflict as stipulated in the GRP-MILF Tripoli Agreement on Peace dated June 22,

WHY/ A20

'No return of MILF camps, no sellout'

By Fr. Eliseo Mercado Jr., OMI

Editor's note: Mercado is the president of Notre Dame University in Cotabato City. He is a convenor of Kusog Mindanao, a peace advocacy group, and headed the Quick Response Team monitoring violations of a 1999 ceasefire agreement between the gov't and the MILF.

COMMENTARY

WHAT is this hullabaloo over the agreement signed by the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front early this month?

Once again, some members of Congress are indulging their "investigative" itch. To my great surprise, the noisy ones—including our own Mindanaoan Rep. Prospero Pichay (Surigao del Sur), chair of the House committee on defense—have not apparently read the documents yet they shoot down the documents as well as the negotiators.

They mouth phrases like "return of the occupied camps to the MILF," "grant of belligerency status to the MILF," and "a complete sellout," spinning images only comic books readers are capable of.

They train their guns at Secretaries Eduardo Ermita and Norberto Gonzales, President Macapagal-Arroyo's advisers on the peace process and on special concerns, respectively, but more on the latter.

The government and the MILF signed two documents in Malaysia. The first is the joint communiqué

NO/ A20

Body of US solon's lover found

WASHINGTON—The remains of Chandra Levy were found in a Washington park, ending an agonizing 13-month search for the former federal intern whose disappearance riveted the nation and cost US Rep. Gary Condit his career.

But the identification of the remains of Levy, 24, who had a close relationship with the 54-year-old married congressman from California, did not end the mystery.

A man walking his dog and looking for turtles in the 704-hectare Rock Creek Park found a skull and other bones, Washington Metropolitan Police Chief Charles H. Ramsey told reporters.

Ramsey said that the medical examiner, who used dental records to confirm the remains were Levy's, was working to determine the manner and cause of her death.

Levy's baffling disappearance sometime May 1, 2001 had gripped America for months until interest in the case evaporated after the Sept. 11 attacks in New York and Washington that killed more than 3,000 people.

Levy's parents, Dr. Robert and Susan Levy, had expressed hope throughout the ordeal that their daughter was still alive.

"Although the discovery of Chandra's body closes one chapter and brings some resolution to this ordeal, it does not . . . solve the mystery of what happened to her," Billy Martin, the family lawyer, said. "This is the worst nightmare that a parent can endure."

Levy's disappearance led to the political demise of Condit, her hometown congressman.

Condit denied having anything to do with the disappearance but he acknowledged to investigators that he had an affair with her, a police source said. Condit, who lost the Democratic primary in his district, is in his final months as a congressman.

"Congressman Gary Condit and his family want to express their heartfelt sorrow and condolences to the Levy

BODY/ A21

13 MONTHS after her disappearance, the remains of Chandra Levy, 24-year-old congressional intern, are found in a Washington, D.C. park.

Tiglao named GMA's new chief of staff

By Elena R. Torrijos and Carlito Pablo

ASIDE from a new bride, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto "Bobi" Tiglao will have a new job at the Palace when he returns from his teaching fellowship in Kyoto University in Japan.

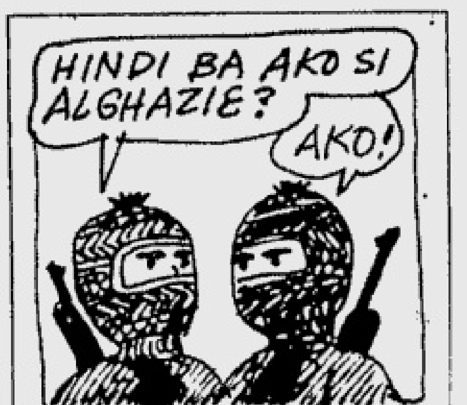
President Macapagal-Arroyo announced Tiglao's appointment as her chief of staff during a briefing with reporters on Wednesday evening, the third day of her five-day working visit to Tokyo and Osaka.

The President is scheduled to arrive today from her Japan visit.

During the press briefing, she also said she was still deciding on Tiglao's replacement as press secretary although he would stay on as presidential spokesperson.

Shortly before Tiglao left for Japan

TIGLAO/ A4


HINDI BA AKO SI ALGHAZIE?
AKO!

Will the real Alghazie please stand up?

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau
and TJ Burgonio, *in Manila*

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Will the real Abu Muslim Alghazie please stand up?

The police and military arrested

WILL/ A20

MGA BIGATIN!

Villar wife now richest solon

By Juliet L. Javellana

WITH the billion-peso pork barrel controversy swirling about it, the House of Representatives released yesterday the latest Statements of Assets and Liabilities of its 216 members that showed all but two of the congressmen were millionaires.

Las Piñas City Rep. Cynthia Villar of the opposition was the wealthiest legislator with a net worth (assets minus liabilities) of P405.5 million. She listed no liabilities in her joint SAL with her husband, Sen. Manuel Villar.

Villar dislodged Manila City Rep. Mark Jimenez, who had been no. 1 in the July 2001 SAL. This time around, Jimenez had a net worth of P355.8 million.

Villar's wealth grew from P331.4 million in her July 2001 SAL, when she had placed second to Jimenez.

Villar said she and her husband's assets grew after a company they founded five years ago declared dividends for the first time last year.

She said she was not sure but the company might have been C&P Homes, their flagship real estate firm.

Like husband, like wife

Villar said she was not surprised at having landed on top of the House's millionaires club.

"My husband was always No. 1 except maybe during his first year," she told the INQUIRER. Senator Villar had served three terms in the House before his wife.

Bayan Muna party-list Reps. Satur Ocampo and Crispin Beltran were the only non-millionaires in the House.

Liza Maza, the third Bayan Muna representative, entered the millionaires club with a net worth of P1.6 million.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Etta Rosales also joined the club with her assets exceeding liabilities by P1.5 million.

Ocampo had a net worth of P723,200 while Beltran had P81,000. Both listed no liabilities.

Compostela Valley Rep. Manuel "Waykurat" Zamora, the poorest congressman as of July 2001 with a net worth of P534,530, entered the millionaires club after his net worth rose to P1,626,000.

In his July 2001 SAL, Zamora listed a net worth of P534,530, but in Dec. 31, 2001, his assets rose to P1.6 million and his liabilities declined to P142,000.

Zamora, who had made waves as the poorest congressman who rode a bicycle to work, was reportedly given a sports utility vehicle by Jimenez.

Top 10 solons

Making it to the top 10 list with Villar and Jimenez were Augusto Syjuco Jr. (Iloilo), P248.7 million; Vicente Sandoval Jr. (Palawan), P242.4 million; Abdullah Dimaporo (Lanao del Norte), P107.9 million; Rafael Nantes (Quezon), P107.9 million; Jack Enrile (Cagayan), P92.4 million; Mark Cojuangco (Pangasinan), P86.6 million; Ismael "Chuck" Mathay III (Quezon City), P81.9 million, and Joey Hizon (Manila), P79.4 million.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. was No. 21, with a net worth of P52 million. The three deputy speakers—Emilio Espinosa (Luzon), Raul Gonzalez (Visayas) and Gerry Salapuddin (Mindanao)—were 151st, 25th and 101st, respectively, on the rich list.

Gonzalez was worth P46.5 million, Salapuddin P12.2 million and Espinosa P5.7 million.

Rep. Imee Marcos (Ilocos Norte), daughter of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and whose family is alleged to have squirreled away billions of dollars overseas, was No. 110 with a net worth of only P10.8 million. She listed no liabilities.

She was bested by Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, only son of Marcos foe Benigno Aquino Jr. and former President Corazon Aquino, who had a net worth of P11.1 million.

His uncle, Rep. Agapito Aquino (Makati), was No. 203 with a net worth of P11.7 million.

Convicted Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, who was supposed to have been removed from the House rolls after his conviction for statutory rape was confirmed, was No. 43 with a net worth of P29.5 million.

Barbers chides Lacson

By Rocky Nazareno

SEN. ROBERT Barbers chided opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday for being "onion-skinned," after Lacson had accused the former of being too accommodating to his accusers during the Senate hearings into Lacson's alleged hidden foreign bank accounts.

Barbers chairs the Senate committee on public order and illegal drugs which, together with the Blue Ribbon and national defense and security committees, looked into allegations by the military intelligence under Col. Victor Corpus that Lacson had amassed dollar bank accounts in the United States, Canada and Hong Kong.

Lacson had accused Barbers of being "too accommodating" to requests made by the National Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Justice during the Senate hearings on Lacson's alleged hidden wealth.

In a press conference, Barbers denied Lacson's accusation and said "it was all work and nothing personal" in the committee hearings.

Getting rattled

"I advise him to be more tough (because) a senator of the Republic should be tough and strong and not get rattled easily," Barbers said.

Barbers that while he gave in twice to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez's request to postpone the hearing, he also acceded twice to Lacson's request for postponement.

He said he also granted Lacson's request to have his chief of staff, Evaristo Gana, included in the witness list even though he was not listed as a resource person.

"Then he said I should get a part of whatever amount (NBI Director Reynaldo) Wycoco and Perez would get if they found any money in his US accounts. If that's true, I would accept the money then I will give it to charity, to depressed provinces and municipalities," Barbers said.

Barbers also took Lacson to task for addressing him simply as "Barbers" on Wednesday.

Onion-skinned

"I have great respect for (Lacson). But I call a senator a senator. You know us politicians, we should not be onion-skinned and too suspicious. We're all just doing our jobs," Barbers said.

Barbers said the three Senate committees looking into the allegations against Lacson will soon release their joint report.

"In fact, we finished the report last month but we had to set it aside because of other priorities we had to deal with," he said.

Barbers said he would ask Senate President Franklin Drilon to include the report in the calendar of business as Congress is set to go on recess on June 6. *With Philip C. Tubeza*

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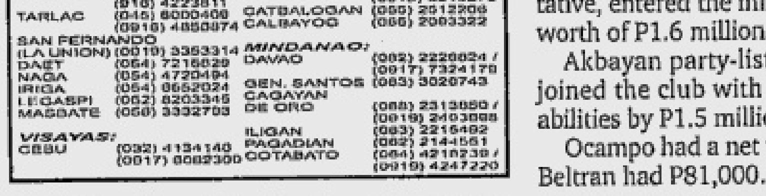

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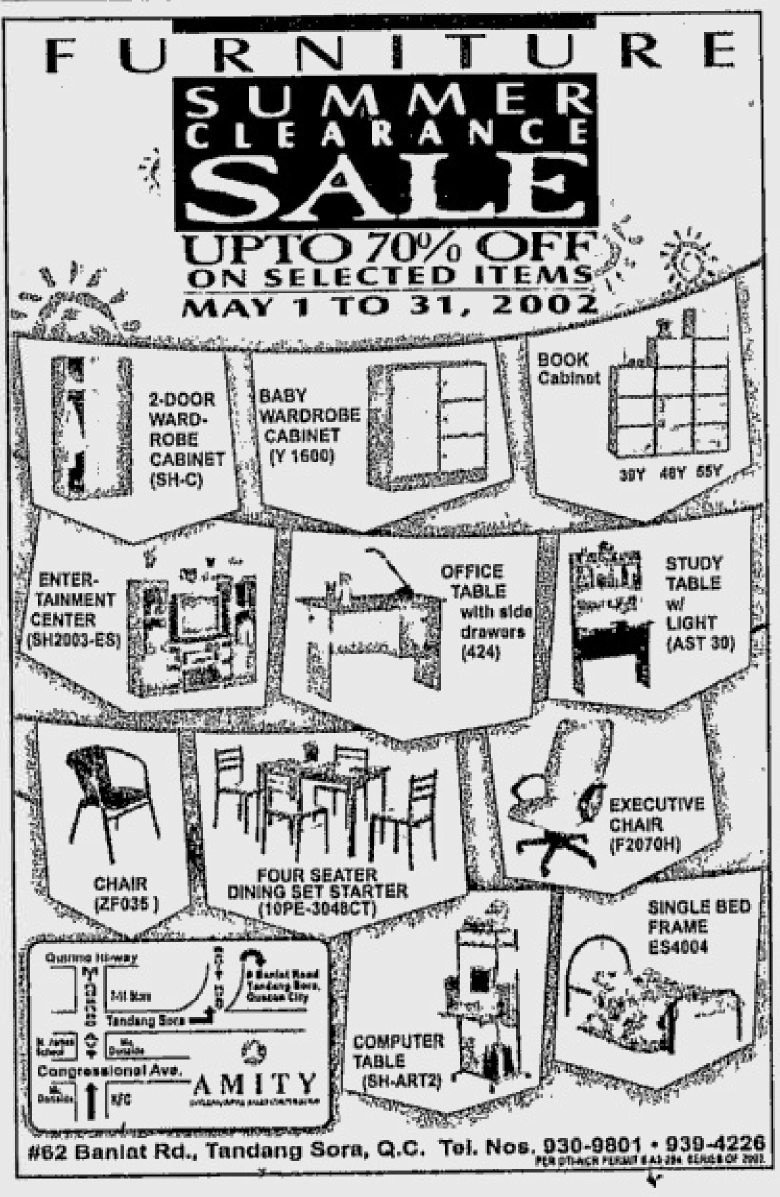
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Prosecutor, 4 others wounded in Abra ambush

CAMP DANGWA, La Trinidad, Benguet—A provincial prosecutor and four other people were shot and wounded in an ambush by three armed men on Thursday in Peñarubia town in Abra, reports here said.

Prosecutor Rodor Gayao and his three companions were on their way to a court hearing in Bucay town, also in Abra, when their car was attacked by the three men, who waited for them along the highway in Barangay Lusuac in Peñarubia.

Gayao was wounded in the left arm. His police escort, PO2 Alexander Bagana, was hit in the shoulder and head while Ruben Brillantes was hit in the elbow. Their driver, Jayson de Guzman, was unhurt.

Nancy Belena, who was on a motorcycle near the ambush site, was hit by a stray bullet on the left side of her body.

Gayao was taken to the Bucay District Hospital while the other wounded were taken to the Abra Provincial Hospital and Seares Medical Clinic in Bangued town.

Last March, a barangay captain was shot and killed in an ambush during the Arya Abra fiesta celebration in Bangued.

On Dec. 27 last year, Mayor Jose Segundo of Tubo, Abra, was killed by a sniper's bullet in a mountain village in the town. ***Jovelyn Reyes and Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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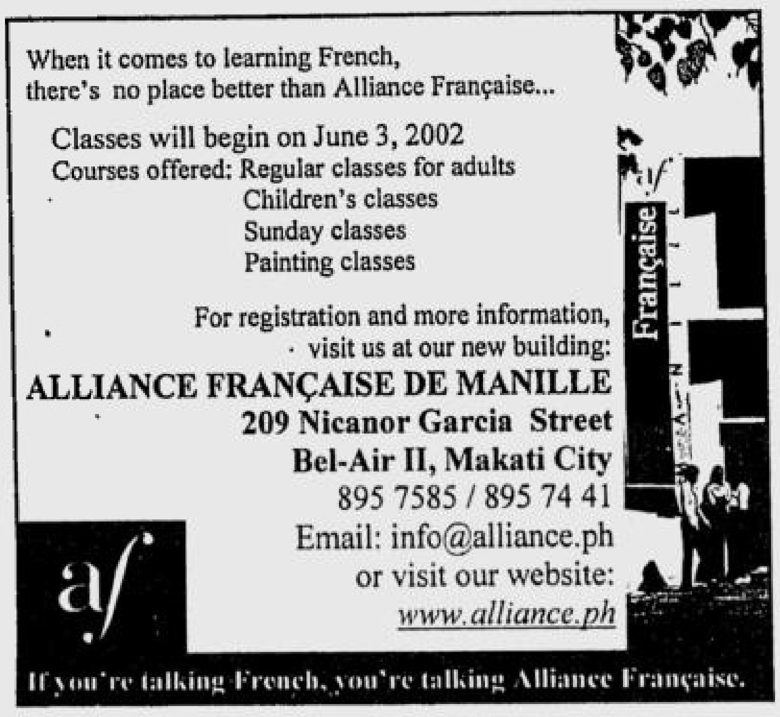

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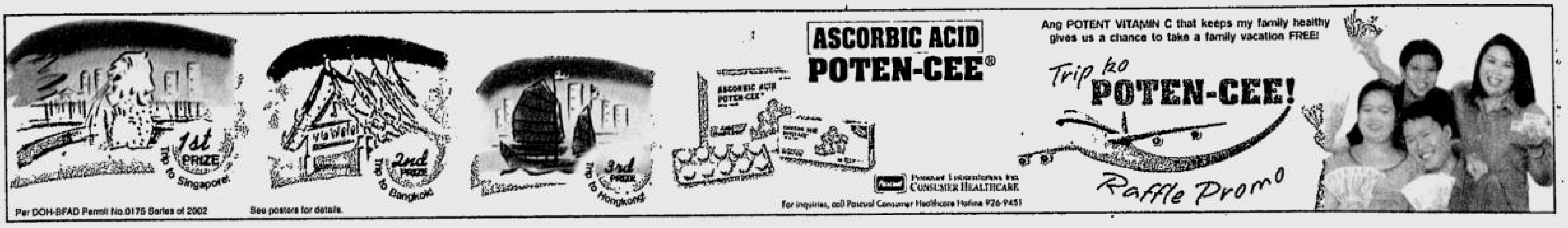

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John O won't let FVR off the hook

From page A1

"(Ramos) complained that he was being made into a punching back? You know what a punching bag is? It's hung on a string. Well, I think (Ramos) should be made into one," Osmeña told Senate reporters yesterday.

Osmeña was reacting to reports that Ramos had complained that he "felt like a punching bag" amid accusations that he entered into midnight deals with IPPs just before he relinquished the presidency in June 1998.

Ramos said members of the 9th and 10th Congresses, who had oversight powers for the review of IPP contracts, were partly responsible for the high cost of electricity.

The guaranteed deals have given rise to the purchased power adjustment (PPA), an automatic cost recovery mechanism by power contractors whose cost is passed on to consumers in the form of higher electricity payments.

"How short are their memories," Ramos said of the lawmakers.

"Naturally, he wouldn't want to be questioned on the contracts that they signed, contracts that were not even necessary," said Osmeña, member of the 9th and 10th Congresses.

The Senate committee on government corporations and public enterprises, which Osmeña chairs, had earlier summoned Ramos to an inquiry into the IPP contracts entered into by the government.

"I'm still studying my answer to the letter of Senator Osmeña," Ramos said.

Osmeña acknowledged that he could not compel Ramos to appear before his committee.

Coward

"We cannot do anything if (Ramos) does not want to appear because he is a coward. I can't tie him down and bring him here," he said.

Amid growing protests against the PPA, members of Congress are now trying to outdo each other in proposing ways to reduce electricity rates by lowering the PPA charges.

In the House of Representatives, the committee on energy has approved House Bill No. 4741 seeking to exempt from payment of the PPA users of not more than 70 kilowatt-hours a month.

In the Senate, 17 senators have signed a consolidated bill, Senate Bill No. 2140, seeking to exempt residential users from payment of the PPA for the next three years.

Both bills are aimed at amending the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) of 2001.

Band aid solution

Opposition Sen. Edgardo Angara yesterday described SB 2140, a measure being pushed by Sen. Renato Cayetano, as a "band aid solution to a problem that needs amputation."

Angara is proposing that the PPA be brought down from the current P3.30 per kwh to only P1.18 and give 9.5 million low and middle-income consumers special rates.

His proposal would also place a cap on the collection of stranded costs from end-users, distribution utilities and power generation entities.

Angara said there should also be "full competition and a prohibition on cross-ownership of power distribution and power generation entities."

Hocus-pocus

Sen. Joker Arroyo scored the ongoing debates on how to reduce the PPA as a "lot of hocus-pocus."

"All the arithmetic boils down to the following: if the PPA being paid by the consumers will be reduced, the amount of reduction will be paid for in the long run by the government from the taxes collected from the people," Arroyo noted.

He said that what the people and government were paying for are liabilities "that are already there."

"No matter how it is massaged, it will never disappear," he said.

Arroyo said both Malacañang and Congress were deliberately skirting the issue on who should pay for the liabilities of the National Power Corp.

"Taxpayer and/or consumers will pay for them. No one else. Not the government, not Napocor, not Meralco, not the electric distributors, not the electric corporations, not the IPPs (independent power producers)—only the public," Arroyo said.

He chided the politicians who promised consumers that they would not be paying for the liabilities incurred by Napocor when in reality "the agony of (taxpayers and/or consumers) would only be prolonged" by the various schemes proposed at the Senate and House of Representatives.

"Is there a remedy? Ask the heavens," Arroyo said.

UCCP bishops

Like some legislators, bishops of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) want the PPA scrapped.

Bishop Allan Ray Sarte of the UCCP North Luzon said the Luzon-wide blackout on Tuesday was enough reason for the nine-member council of bishops to support the proposal of Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo to abolish the PPA.

Ocampo was discussing the perils of the PPA charges before the UCCP national assembly when the power outage struck.

"The UCCP bishops have not yet put our opposition to the PPA on paper because our assembly will end only this weekend. But the common sentiment of all the bishops is that consumers should not be forced to shoulder the (power industry) debts of the earlier administrations," Sarte told the INQUIRER.

He said Ocampo's position was a clear-cut summation of the power industry problem.

In a prepared speech, Ocampo said the root of the PPA crisis was the government's privatization agenda.

"The current controversy about the PPA and the very controversial and iniquitous IPP contracts are under investigation by the energy and regulatory commission, by the Senate and by the House of Representatives. We have not gone to the bottom of it," he said.

On Wednesday, the Catholic vicariate for Baguio and Benguet conducted its first public consultation on the PPA.

The discussion resulted in a unified rejection of the PPA by the forum participants led by members of the militant Cordillera Peoples Alliance.

Jimmy Salman, North Luzon president of the Napocor Employees and Workers Union (Newu), said the forum participants were overwhelmed by the complicated billing formulas of the power industry.

He said critics of the government's power industry agenda should address this problem.

Newu chapters in Northern Luzon and Mindanao and the Napocor Employees Consolidated Union (Necu) criticized the IPP contracts in 1999 and 2000, when they opposed the omnibus power reform measure.

Sarte said the UCCP's objections to the PPA were related to their ongoing objections to President Macapagal-Arroyo's globalization policies.

"Power reform is part of the (prerequisites) of global trade, and that is why Ms Macapagal signed the power industry reform act into law," he said.

Tiglao named GMA's new chief of staff

From page A1

last month after marrying Getsy Selirio, the President had named Tiglao press secretary but had later recalled the appointment, saying that he might have difficulty getting confirmed by the Commission on Appointments.

At present, the Presidential Management Staff head Silvestre Afable is acting press secretary. But the President said she planned to appoint a press secretary and elevate the PMS head to Cabinet rank.

Morphing together

Ms Macapagal explained she needed a chief of staff as Renato Corona, her former chief of staff, has been named associate justice of the Supreme Court.

Tiglao said he was honored to be taking on the job as soon as he returns.

"It's a big job and I hope I can fulfill the duties of that position," Tiglao said.

"Bobi is a very good spokesman for me because we metamorphosed together," the President noted, adding that she and Tiglao have very similar ideas.

Regarding the incoming press secretary, the President said she hadn't made up her mind yet who it would be but admitted she had some prospects.

In reply to a question, she also said that she was open to the possibility of having someone from the political opposition join her Cabinet.

"I am not closed to the idea. I am open to the idea," she said.

Is Alvarez on way out?

More controversial is another presidential appointment dated May 17. Ms Macapagal named Press Undersecretary Manuel Sanchez as an undersecretary for program implementation and local government at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

The appointment has stirred anew talks that DENR Secretary Heherson Alvarez may be replaced should he fail to get confirmed before Congress adjourns next month.

For the ninth time, Alvarez will face the Commission on Appointments on May 28. The powerful congressional bicameral commission is reportedly set to hold its plenary session early June.

Should confirmation still elude Alvarez and the "President decides not to reappoint him," some Palace informants claim that Sanchez will serve as "the DENR's OIC (officer in charge).

But other administration sources say that Ms Macapagal will not let go of Alvarez, a veteran street parliamentarian since the days of the Marcos dictatorship. He's also secretary general of the ruling Lakas-NUCD. The President recently assumed its chairmanship.

An original

While a congressman, Alvarez was one of the original complainants in the impeachment case against ex-President Joseph Estrada.

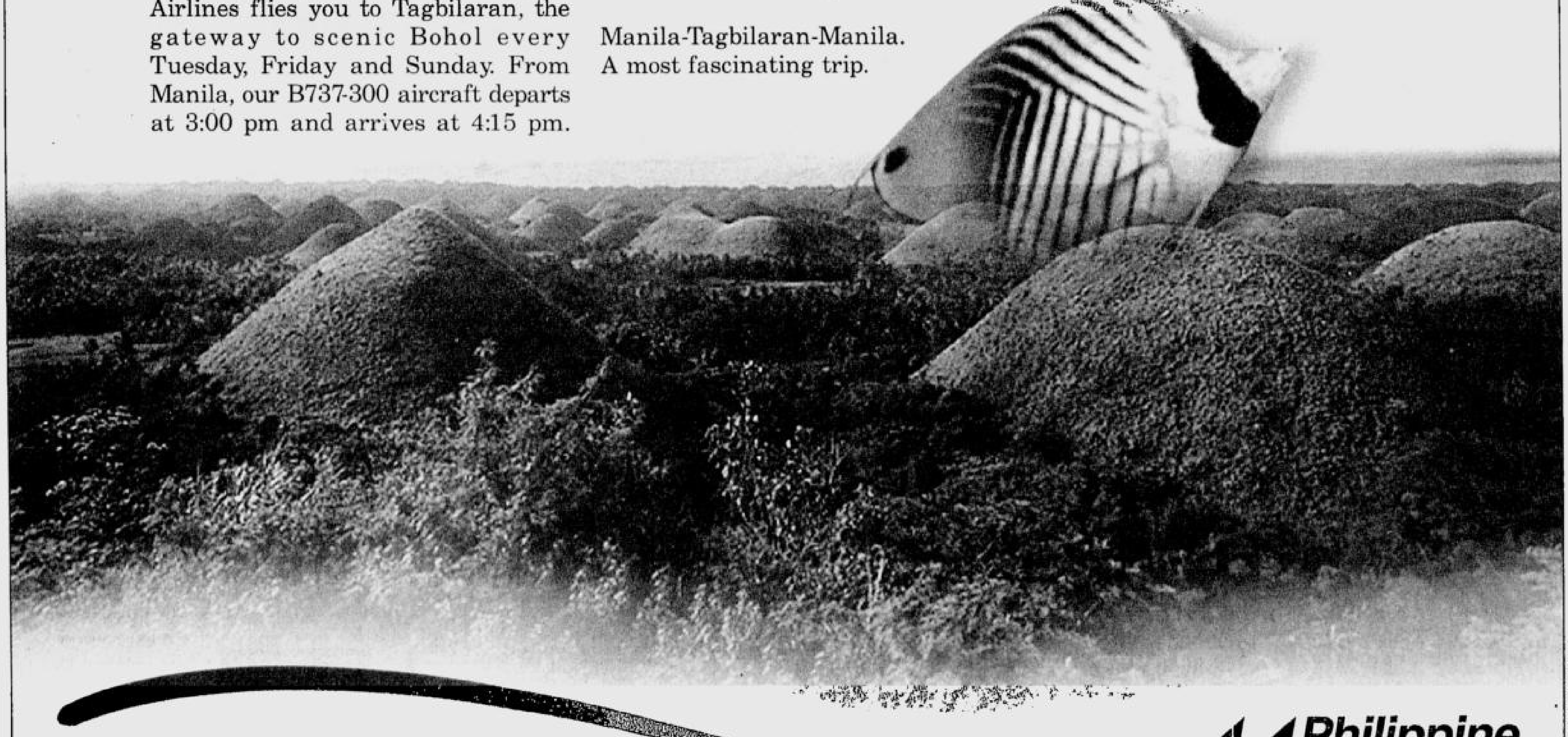
"Sonny (Alvarez) will get a reappointment if he is not again confirmed," a Palace source said.

Two influential blocs in the House—the Southern Tagalog and Mindanao lawmakers' associations—have openly and consistently opposed Alvarez's confirmation.

The anti-Alvarez congressmen include Palawan Rep. Vicente Sandoval, vice chair of the CA's environment committee.

Sanchez, a lawyer and former congressman representing Rizal, will be in charge of implementing DENR projects funded by the Official Development Assistance.

Sanchez begins his new work on Monday.



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Fishermen hit Alvarez order

MILITANT farmers yesterday chided Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez for using the Department of Environment and Natural Resources Administrative Order 17 (DAO 17) as a rallying point for his confirmation by the Commission on Appointments.

The Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya) said DAO 17 was merely an executive order inviting local government units to have their coastal waters measured by the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority in aid of city or municipal resolution.

"The DAO 17 is nothing but a fangless and toothless directive," said Pamalakaya chair Fernando Hicap.

Alvarez had blamed a "pro-commercial fishing" bloc and Palawan Rep. Vicente Sandoval for the delay of his confirmation by the CA in the last hearing last Wednesday.

Alvarez said his oppositors resented his issuance of DAO 17 last year as this gave small municipal fishermen preferential use of water resources by extending municipal waters to 15 km from the shoreline.

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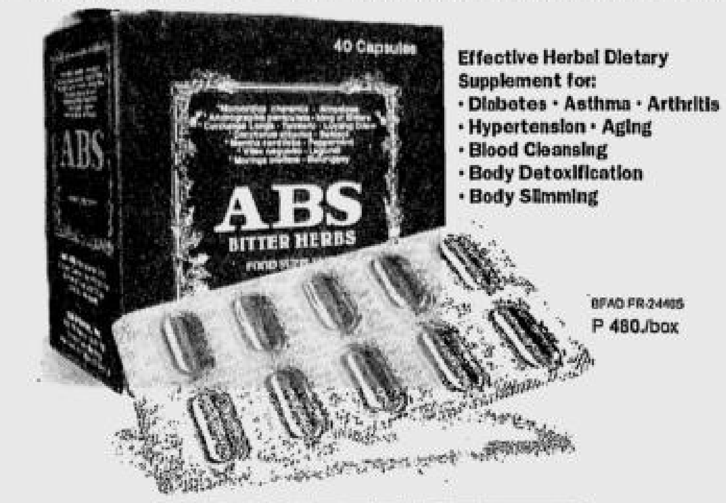

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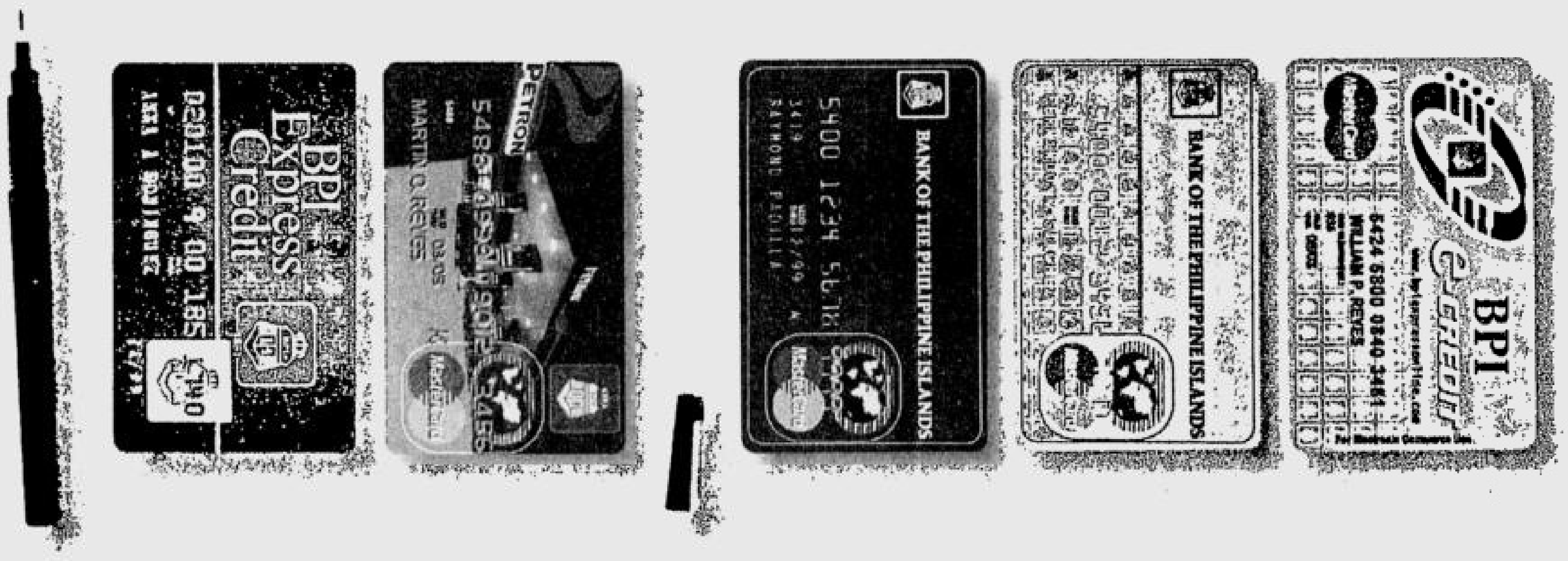

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Pro-landlord DAR execs blamed for Teves arrest

THE RECENT order of the Department of Agrarian Reform's Adjudication Board (Darab) for the arrest of LandBank president Margarito Teves only confirmed a conspiracy between DAR and landowners, a farmers' group claimed yesterday.

Teves was arrested by policemen on Monday on the orders of Darab after the LandBank failed to pay the owners of a 53-hectare land in Nueva Ecija P75 million as payment for the acquisition of the farmland under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

Jose Rodito Angeles, spokesperson of the 15,000 strong Task Force Mapalad, said the incident was not the first time that offices in the DAR have made decisions favoring landlords.

"Teves' arrest only confirms persisting talks that DAR officials are beholden to landowners," Angeles said.

Angeles said long-time employees of the DAR were saying that other officials involved with the implementation of the CARP had been charged due to complaints from landowners.

DAR Sec. Hernani Braganza revealed the other day that an anomalous transaction was entered into by a DAR legal officer in Cabanatuan City with the landowners for the payment of the land for P75 million.

Angeles said farmer-beneficiaries in Negros Occidental also suffer from the slow action by provincial and municipal agrarian reform officers in distributing CARP lands ostensibly due to "due process" being given to former landowners resisting the acquisition of their lands or demanding higher compensation. *Gerald Lacuarta*

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LIBEL, IMPEACHMENT

Feuding poll execs fighting new battles

By Blanche S. Rivera and Christine O. Avendaño

THE MUDDLED situation at the Comelec just got murkier after the protagonists in the commissioners' feud at the poll agency faced new antagonists.

Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo was slapped last week with two P100-million libel suits while his nemesis, Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco, faces an impeachment complaint to be filed next week by 30 nongovernment organizations at the House.

Photokina Marketing Corp., the lead firm in the consortium that bagged the controversial P6.5-billion modernization project of the Commission on Elections, is dead set on seeing Benipayo pay for damaging the company's reputation, according to a company official.

Photokina spokesperson George Balagtas said the accusations of bribery and corruption made against the firm by Benipayo have "cast doubts on the integrity of the firm."

Photokina filed the two libel suits for the "slanderous and malicious" statements made by the Comelec chair in a forum at the University of the Philippines. The statements were also published in full in another newspaper and were aired on the ANC television channel.

Down the drain

Balagtas said their clients, suppliers and creditors are starting to have "pressing reservations" about their dealings with Photokina because of its problem with the Comelec.

"We're not a political group yet we've been dragged into this mess. We will not let it just go down the drain," Balagtas told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

He said the situation with their clients and suppliers was "not yet that serious, but definitely damage has been done" to the firm.

Photokina and its partners—Unisys, Sagem SA, IBM Phils., Polaroid and Headstrong—won the bidding for the P6.5-billion Voters Registration and Identification System project in October 2000, but it turned out the Comelec did not have enough money for the deal.

The consortium secured a court order compelling the Comelec to honor their contract, but Benipayo brought the matter to the Supreme Court.

Benipayo has said he would block the "disadvantageous" contract as long as he was in the Comelec.

Impeach now

In the case of Tancangco, Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella yesterday said he would endorse the impeachment complaint at the House next week.

Puentevella had called for Tancangco's impeachment in a privileged speech on Wednesday for betraying the public trust with her many "failures." He asked his colleagues to "impeach her immediately."

The signatures of 77 congressmen, or one-third of the House membership, are needed to send an impeachment complaint to the Senate, which then convenes as an impeachment court.

Puentevella said the impeachment complaint would be against Tancangco alone, despite calls from his colleagues to include the three other Comelec commissioners aligned with her.

During interpellation, Cebu Rep. Clavel Martinez told Puentevella the impeachment complaint should include Commissioners Ralph Lantion, Mehol Sadain and Rufino Javier, all of whom, like Tancangco, had been appointed by deposed President Joseph Estrada.

In his privileged speech, Puentevella listed 10 issues against Tancangco.

Foremost of these were her fixation on voter registration rather on improving the conduct and accuracy of the vote count and her failure to bring about the automation of the vote count in the May 14, 2001 elections as chair of the Comelec modernization committee.

She was also scored for her bias for the VRIS project by causing the award of the contract to Photokina for P6.5 billion even if the Comelec only had a budget of P1.2 billion for the project.

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Evidence vs Cardeño strong–PNP

By TJ Burgonio

SAYING it has strong evidence, the national police said it would file today murder charges against Supt. Rafael Cardeño, the alleged mastermind in the killing of government informant Baron Cervantes, and six other suspects.

Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, Philippine National Police spokesperson, said police evidence consisted mainly of the testimony of captured alleged gunman ex-Marine Sgt. Joseph Mostrales, who had tagged Cardeño as the brains.

Police have also gathered documents to back up Mostrales' sworn statement, he said, but declined to specify these.

Mostrales, Jaime Centeno and four others, whose identities were withheld, will also be charged with murder before the Department of Justice.

Cardeño, founding chair of the Young Officers' Union which mounted a series of failed coup attempts against the Aquino administration in the late '80s, has repeatedly denied involvement in Cervantes' slay.

His lawyers had questioned the manhunt order against him and petitioned the Quezon City regional trial court to lift the order. The court granted their petition on Wednesday.

Espina also said it would be up to the justice department to determine if Mostrales could qualify as a state witness. The alleged gunman had offered to turn state witness following his arrest in Pangasinan on May 18.

"I think the first requirement is that he should not be the most guilty," he said.

Espina declined to confirm reports that another suspect has been arrested by agents of the National Anti-Crime Commission Anti-KFR Task Force (Naktaf).

Meanwhile, Director General Leandro Mendoza has ordered the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM) to open an administrative inquiry into Cardeño's involvement in Cervantes' killing.

"If a probable cause is found to link him to the crime during the pre-charge proceedings, a summary hearing board will be formed to conduct further investigation," said a DIDM official, who asked not to be named.

If found guilty of grave misconduct, Cardeño could face dismissal from the service, he added.

In the wake of the order, the DIDM has asked the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) to submit statements of its own set of witnesses in Cervantes' killing.

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2 departments to probe vehicle testing anomalies

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communication said it has joined the Department of Trade and Industry in the investigation of alleged irregularities in the accreditation of vehicle emission testing centers.

Clearance from the testing centers will become a requirement in the annual registration of commercial and private vehicles this year.

Trade and Industry Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. said on Wednesday the DTI had to form a special committee on accreditation of Private Emission Testing Centers (Petcs) due to alleged anomalies involved in the pre-qualification of 186 companies. He said most of the applicants have spurious and suspiciously similar-looking documents.

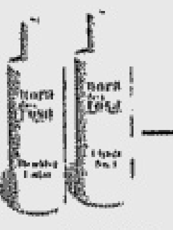
Yesterday, Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez ordered a similar investigation. He said he would take administrative and criminal action against any DOTC official found involved in the anomaly.

He directed the DOTC committee to coordinate with the DTI in its investigation.

Cristobal said the probe would delay the implementation of the testing by one or two months from its original schedule of July this year under the Clean Air Act.

Cristobal said the fiasco arose from the DOTC decision to ease up on the pre-qualification of PETC applicants last month. Cristobal admitted, though, that the DTI signed the changes in the guidelines for pre-qualification.

Gil Cabacungan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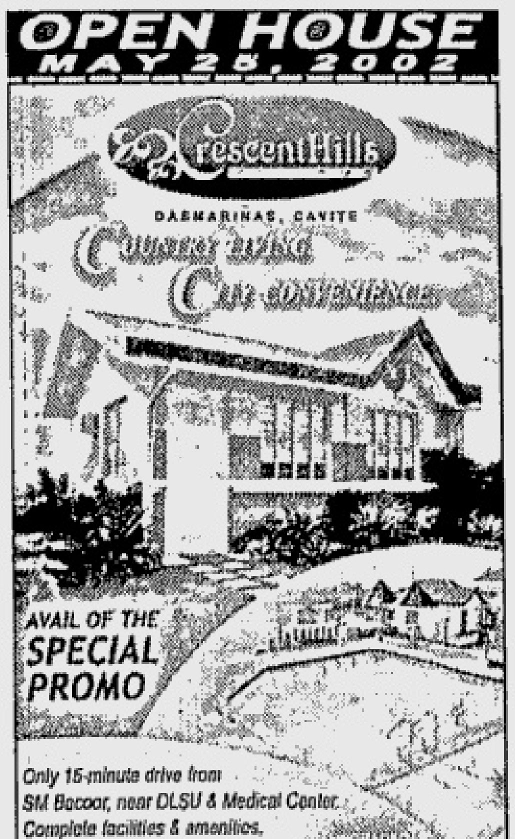
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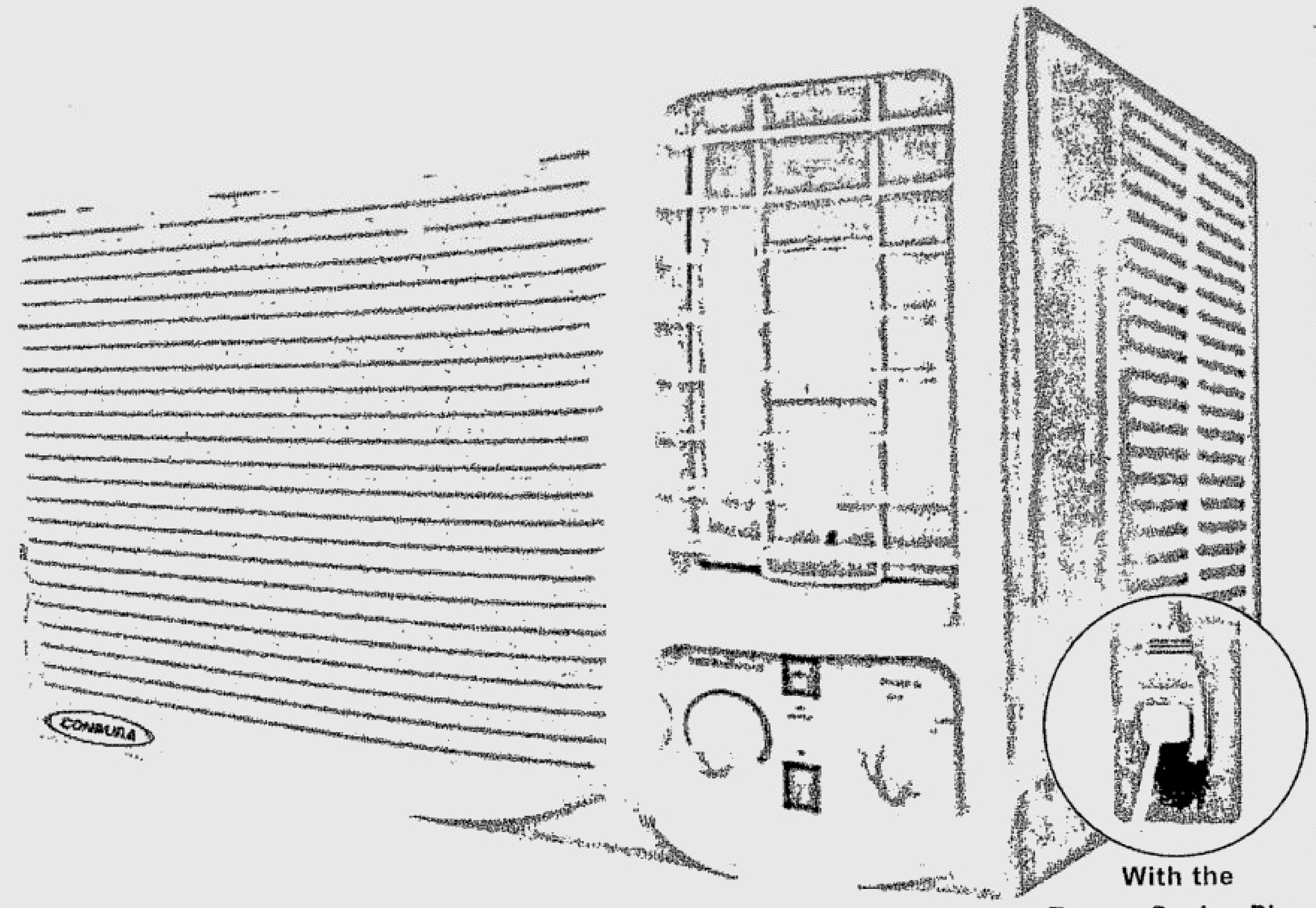

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Watch the language

EDITORIAL

THE PROBLEM is that Norberto Gonzales seemed unable to adequately parry the questions thrown at him during the hearing conducted Wednesday by the House defense committee on the interim agreements he had signed with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's adviser and "back-channel" negotiator may know the MILF rebels like the back of his hand, as he piquantly said to that effect. But he flubbed grievously when he admitted that he knew only "some" of the 45 MILF camps that the military recovered in the course of the Estrada administration's "all-out" war against the secessionist group in 2000. On the grandstand that is Philippine politics, Gonzales' interrogators scored big on that admission, he being saddled by, among other things, the perceived disadvantage that he is not from Mindanao.

The attentive observer will agree that language is crucial in the perpetual back and forth of political animals. It behooves Gonzales as "back-channel" negotiator to be not only knowledgeable and diplomatic but also sharp and savvy. It will not do to admit to a particular ignorance, particularly because in this neck of the woods important issues are settled—or at least appear to be—in a cacophony of voices, with the "best" sound bite winning. (And as the President's trouble-shooter, it behooves Gonzales to be able to smooth the ruffled feathers of assorted officials livid at being presented with what they make out to be a *fait accompli*. He's been in the game long enough, and should know by now that hell hath no fury like an official left out of the bargaining, or the spoils. He should have been wary of traps, and taken pains to skirt them.)

"Reparations." "Return of the camps." As Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said at the hearing, he wanted "clarification" on certain issues "because they were subject to varying interpretations."

Gonzales' interrogators, as well as other officials invited to the hearing, noted that the interim agreements appeared to state that the MILF camps would be "returned" to the rebels. A sensitive point, particularly in light of Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu's dramatic presentation of what it took for the Armed Forces, which he now heads, to capture the camps at issue: 85 dead soldiers and 250 wounded.

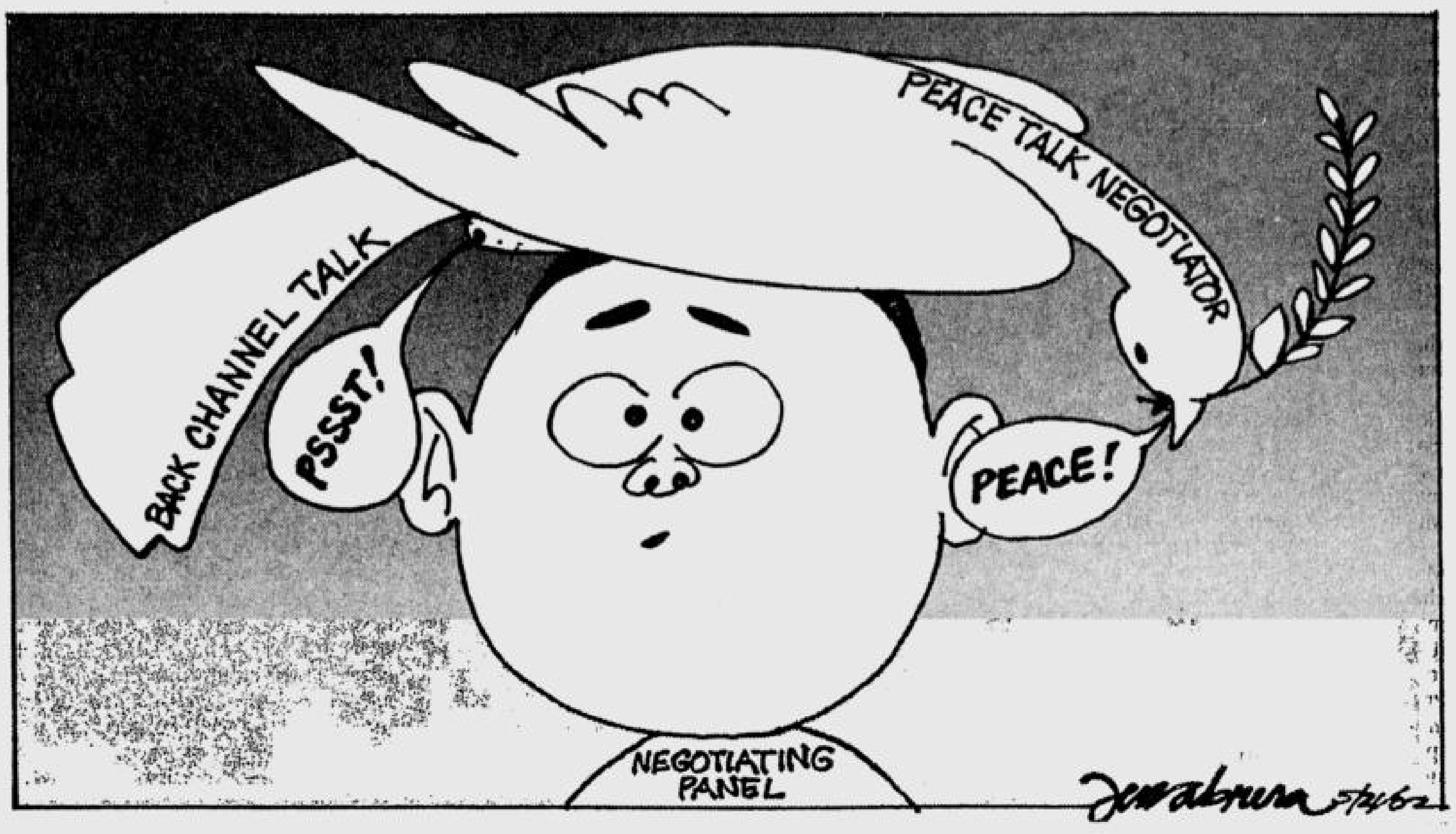
Unless we missed out in the reportage, what we would have wanted to hear from Gonzales was that the MILF camps are not purely military camps but also residential areas, where civilians live and work, with the schools, offices and other structures that mark community life. What could be so wrong, we would have wanted to hear him ask, with an agreement to rebuild those camps and allow those who once lived there to return—yes, even only as a confidence-building measure? After all, we would have wanted to hear him add, in the course of the military campaign of which Cimatu spoke so emotionally, there were also civilians killed, tens of thousands of families forced to flee their homes and their farms, and children permanently scarred by the war.

As for the matter of "reparations," over which representatives like Zamboanga City Rep. Celso Lobregat are frothing at the mouth, the term has many meanings including "making amends for wrong or injury done" or "restoration to good condition." But Lobregat chose to zero in on the "military" meaning—that is, monetary compensation paid by a defeated country to another country or individual for loss suffered during or as a result of war—as made obvious by his macho language.

"This, in effect, has the meaning that we lost a war," Lobregat was reported as saying. "Why will we pay?" Surely a man after Joseph Estrada's own heart. But aren't they—committee interrogators, military men, North Cotabato governor—all?

The interim agreements that Gonzales signed, which also involve the isolation and interdiction of "all criminal elements and kidnap-for-ransom groups including so-called 'Lost Commands' operating in Mindanao"—are expected to pave the way for a final peace agreement between the government and the MILF in six months. Even MILF chief negotiator Al-haj Murad sounds hopeful.

But unless the administration complements this with an intelligent, comprehensive program that addresses the age-old "Mindanao problem," we can expect to be trapped in an infuriating exercise of language.



Everything's going up except GMA

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

A NEIGHBOR complained about the rising prices.

"Everything is going up," she said. "*Ilaw, tubig, gasolina,* LPG, *pasahe,* tuition fees, school supplies, food, rent. *Lahat tumataas. Ang hindi lang tumataas ay ang ating Presidente.*"

No truer words were said. But she forgot one thing: our foreign debt is also rising. Also, the travel bills of our President.

* * *

Until now, they still do not know for sure what caused the Luzon-wide blackout last Tuesday.

"At this point, it's not very clear what has been the cause of this blackout," said presidential spokesperson Silvestre Afable Jr. "We know it's tripping of the line. But we really don't know the root cause."

The National Power Corp. said the tripping was caused by a "spurious signal" sent by the National Transmission Corp.'s (Transco) power line carrier. The signal erroneously "ordered a breaker to open" which caused the Biñan-Sta. Rosa line to trip, said the Napocor.

That's the trouble with our government—there are so many things that are spurious: spurious contracts (with the independent power producers, with Jancom, with Century Drilling, with Piatco, etc.), spurious agreements (which the Moro Islamic Liberation Front), spurious bank accounts (the Jose Velarde and Marcos account), spurious bond floats (the Code-NGO float), spurious deals (the PEA-Amari, Centennial Expo and Department of Education deals), spurious gold, spurious pesos and dollars, spurious medicine, spurious CDs and VCDs, and now "spurious signals" that can black out the whole island of Luzon. We even have a "spurious President," according to Erap and his followers.

And it's not only the transmission line carrier that sends "erroneous signals." Malacañang sends many of that too. So, many government officials don't understand and make mistakes. For example, President Macapagal sent the signal that she will not sign the "flawed" Jancom garbage disposal contract. Chair Benjamin Abalos of the Metro Manila Development Authority obviously got an "erroneous signal" and does not (or does not want to) understand. Why else is he still negotiating with Jancom to save this "flawed contract"?

* * *

Here is some good news for a change. Deputy Customs Commissioner Emma Rosqueta (about whose shabby treatment in the Bureau of Customs we have written so many times) has been restored as BOC deputy commissioner. Rosqueta, a career official, was replaced as deputy commissioner for collection and monitoring by a newcomer, Gil Valera, for no apparent reason. There is no pending case against her. So she sued in court. The regional trial court and the Court of Appeals ordered her reinstatement. When her BOC superiors still refused to reinstate her, she sued them for contempt of court. So the new customs commissioner had no choice but to reinstate her.

But the commissioner still played a dirty trick on her. She was appointed deputy commissioner for administration, a positioned vacated by a 70-year-old woman who retired. Valera stays as deputy commissioner for collection and revenue monitoring, which is the most important position for the customs deputies. The commissioner still did not obey the court orders to reinstate her to her former position.

Clues as to why she was replaced by Valera are now coming out. As the title explains, the position is responsible for collecting customs revenues. Since Valera assumed that position, customs collections have dropped by P3 billion. That's a P3 billion loss in only three or four months. But Valera is being rewarded by making his stay there permanent.

Asked during a House committee investigation who recommended him to the position, Valera replied that it was Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, one of whose advisers is former Customs Commissioner Guillermo Parayno.

Was Valera perchance given a special assignment at customs? Is it to raise funds for the 2004 campaign? Has the customs collections dropped because the difference is being split between the importers and the 2004 campaign coffers? I'm not saying that is the case. I'm just asking questions.

And was Rosqueta removed to relieve her as chair of the special committee reviewing the claims of SGS against the BOC? While she was in the freezer, the commissioner lost no time in appointing another deputy commissioner to head the committee. She immediately recommended the payment of claims to SGS billions more than the amount recommended by the Rosqueta committee. Her job done, that deputy commissioner retired. It was now safe for Rosqueta to return. The higher amount has been approved and sent to Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho. But will part of that bigger amount somehow end up in the 2004 campaign fund? Just asking.

Anyway, the House committee is still investigating this scandal.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: After yesterday's joke about the old priest, a reader contributed this joke about three nuns who went to heaven.

At the pearly gates, St. Peter greeted them. "You can come in if you can answer these questions," he said. To the first nun, he asked, "Who was the first man on earth?"

"That's easy," replied the sister. "Adam."

"Correct," said St. Peter, "you can come in." To the second nun, he asked, "Who was the first woman on earth?"

"That's easy, too," said the sister. "Eve."

"Correct. You may come in," said St. Peter. To the third sister, he asked, "What were the first words of Eve to Adam?"

The third nun was stumped. She pondered the question for some time.

"C'mom," Peter prodded her, "what's the answer?"

Still unsure of the answer, the nun said, "It's hard."

"Correct!" said St. Peter.

Even playing field

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I CAN believe it. Just when the country is clamoring for the scrapping of the purchased power adjustment, or PPA, the whole of Luzon is plunged into darkness.

The official explanation for it is not *dikya* or jellyfish but a tripped transmission line that cut power to some 40 million people on a particularly hot summer's day. That offers some ironic metaphors, chief of them being that the tripped transmission line was meant to deliver swiftly and surely the message: No PPA, no electricity. Who says only the Abu Sayyaf likes to take hostages? Other people do too—they like to hold an entire community hostage to their demands. They are not called terrorists, they are called executives.

But what's wrong with the PPA?

At the barest level, at the level of instinct, you know there's something wrong when a minimum wage earner finds a P1,000 bill tacked on to his meter, which as several representatives have pointed out represents a fifth or sixth of his income. It's a recipe for another "Edsa III," or at least it's an engraved invitation to pilfer electricity from richer neighbors. I myself am not rich, owning no property and living entirely by my wits, and I find it oppressive that my electricity bill has risen to stratospheric heights these past couple of months. There are limits to how low you can keep consumption in these El Niño times.

But there's more than instinct to go by here. Defenders of the PPA say we cannot keep changing rules in midstream, and reneging on our commitments to the independent power producers (IPPs), which scrapping the PPA will do. True, but only if the original contract is reasonable, only if the original commitments are sensible. What is the PPA essentially? It is a subsidy to power producers. It is a guarantee that whatever happens—the peso falls, a financial crisis happens, consumers decide to use less power—they will earn their profits. This is so because the government, through the National Power Corp., has agreed to pre-purchase the power they supply at a certain rate and volume. If consumers decide to use less power, that is their fault. They will be billed anyway for the unused power their government has already bought.

You grant the conditions in which these power producers came in, which were the straitened times of the early 1990s, when "brownout" became a household word and "people power" turned into lack of power, and these arrangements remain iniquitous in the extreme. They are certainly iniquitous to consumers. Jose de Venecia defends his former boss, Fidel Ramos, whose administration approved the PPA, by saying that when the IPPs built their power plants in the early 1990s, they projected a growing economy. "Unfortunately, we were affected by the 1997 Asian financial crisis and then our economy was bungled by Joseph Estrada. So we have the excess power." It is an explanation that leaves one question hanging. Which is: Why make everybody, except those who made the projections, pay for those wrong projections?

The irony is that Ramos would be known as the president who made liberalization, privatization and globalization the buzzwords of his administration. This agreement clearly violates all of those norms. The concept of guaranteed profits has no place in all this. To appreciate the complete gratuitousness of this, or its disadvantageousness to the public, we need only compare it with the kind of deal we have with the farmers, or rice producers, which has shrunk rice production, and worse decimated the ranks of farmers.

You cannot say rice is less a vital, or critical, commodity than power. It holds the key to politics in this country. But look at the way the government treats the rice producers, independent or not. It leaves them at the mercy of the rice cartel, the organized group of purchasers who buy their rice at less than market value—the ways farmers are coerced into this, from open thuggery to corrupt government inspectors certifying their harvest is sub-par will take several volumes to fill—and sell it at prices they pretty much dictate. The rice producers are not guaranteed a reasonable income, not to speak of profit, from their arduous labors. They are guaranteed only unusually harsh levels of exploitation.

One reason for this—which is why I cannot see how privatizing the Napocor will solve anything in the case of power supply—is that the National Food Authority became a virtual nonentity in the rice trade, leaving the field to private buyers. From buying the bulk of the rice from farmers at reasonable rates during Marcos' time, it bought only less than 10 percent of it during Cory's time. That was the result of privatization and liberalization, a concept that clearly proved extremely selective in application. The opposite happened in power supply. Liberalization did not lead to the ruthless exploitation of the independent producers of power, it led to their boundless aggrandizement.

One would imagine that the if government were to subsidize anyone, if the government were to exert itself to protect anyone, it would be the weak rather than the strong. Ramos would also be known as the president who sought vigorously to restore an even playing field. Alas, reputations are not always based on real accomplishments. I said then, and I say now, that evening the playing field cannot apply only to businessmen, or producers of some commodities. It must apply to all of society, or to the producers of all commodities. The producers of rice, the producers of services and the producers of—never has that phrase been more apt than here—"labor power."

Otherwise, you only substitute for the phrase, "Some people are brighter than others," one that says, "Some groups are brighter than others."

It ain't even. And it ain't fair.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Clarifying the issues

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

TWO documents signed between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Malaysia to bring peace in central Mindanao have come under fire for, first, lack of transparency in the negotiations; and, second, for allegedly paving the way for the return to the MILF of its 45 camps captured by the Armed Forces in 2000.

These are the joint communiqué signed between the government and the MILF on May 6, 2002, and the implementing guidelines (signed on May 7, 2002) on the humanitarian, rehabilitation and development aspects of the 2001 RP-MILF Tripoli Peace Agreement.

The purpose of this article is to clarify the issues that have somehow been muddled in the course of interpreting the May 6 and May 7 agreements.

The communiqué was signed by Secretary Norberto Gonzales, presidential adviser for special concerns, on behalf of the government; and Lanang Ali, on behalf of the MILF. The implementing guidelines was signed by Gonzales and Musib Buat, on behalf of the MILF.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed on March 8, 2002, a memorandum authorizing back-channel talks with the MILF and Gonzales to sign interim agreements on behalf of the government. It instructed Gonzales to fast-track talks leading to a final peace agreement. To signify the President's stamp authority for the talks, the memo appointed Silvestre Afable, presidential spokesperson and head of the Presidential Management Staff, to assist Gonzales.

The creation of this fast-track mechanism has been criticized for bypassing the official government negotiating panel with the MILF chaired by Jesus Dureza, presidential adviser for Mindanao. According to Gonzales, the President created this mechanism because the level of negotiations between Dureza's panel and that of the MILF had bogged down. Obviously, the President was impatient for results, but the two parallel mechanisms dealing with the MILF have also resulted in lack of coordination.

Gonzales claims that the two documents cited above are merely tentative agreements that could be modified once they are reviewed by the Cabinet oversight committee on Internal Security. He said that the two documents had been examined by Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo who gave the go-ahead for signing them. The draft of the two documents had not been submitted to members of the oversight committee whose members included National Security Adviser Roilo Golez, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, Interior Secretary Jose Lina and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona. The fact that they had not been shown the drafts, although three main issues were discussed at one meeting, is the source of criticism that the Gonzales mechanism had sidelined the Dureza panel and the misgivings of Reyes over issues concerning the return of the MILF camps taken by the military during President Estrada's "all-out war" whose overall architect was Reyes, then chief of staff of the Armed Forces.

Of course, the President has the prerogative in creating parallel mechanisms in the peace process. But prerogative is not the question. The question is whether the two tentative agreements have led to "confidence building." Gonzales has described the two documents as "confidence-building" measures.

Apparently, these have not inspired confidence, especially over transparency, in the military establishment, in the Dureza panel and Christian political leaders in Mindanao, notably Gov. Manny Piñol of Cotabato, who wrote a critique of the agreements in the Inquirer's May 23 issue. There are issues over which Piñol can be faulted, but these can be addressed later. Dureza himself has corrected, at a hearing in Congress, the allegations that his panel had been bypassed. In fact, he had inputs in the writing of the document on guidelines implementing the 2001 Tripoli agreement.

The draft guidelines were based on Dureza's comments and that of the MILF panel, and Afable amalgamated the two papers. While the two documents have not inspired military confidence, the MILF expressed confidence in them. MILF chief negotiator Al-haj Murad emphasized that the agreements did not contemplate handing over the captured camps to the MILF. "Take it from me," he said, "the MILF will not retake its fallen camps but will work for the rehabilitation of conflict areas in Mindanao." Reyes, Gen. Roy Cimatu, now Armed Forces chief of staff, who led the operations on the camps, and Piñol don't take Al-haj Murad's assurance at face value. They see in the agreements giving a back door entry for the MILF to regain its fallen camps.

Cimatu's anxieties are understandable, given that the military paid heavily for the seizure of the camps: 85 soldiers were killed and 250 were wounded in the three-month campaign, not to mention the diversion of large budgetary money from economic development programs to the Mindanao war. Although there is absolutely no mention of the camps in both documents and the issue of the camps was never raised in the negotiations, the military is bothered about the provisions for the award of "reparations" by the government for the properties of evacuees destroyed during the war. The reparations apparently refer to the evacuees, but Piñol read too many meanings into the provision, interpreting them as reparations to the MILF. This interpretation led to the question of why should the MILF be given reparations when they were the losers?

Reparations are only one of the three main issues raised against the agreements, which will be examined later. At this stage, it is clear that the agreements require further revision to overcome these issues.

Those were the days?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I WAS just recently talking with a friend and she rather sheepishly mentioned that when she graduated from a Catholic women's college in the early 1970s, she did so as part of a "protest delegation." "We refused to wear a toga and came to our graduation in our regular uniform. It was our way of protesting what we saw as the extravagance of the occasion, and to express our commitment to a simple way of life, in solidarity with the poor."

The real wonder of this conversation is not that she was able to say all these with a straight face, but that I found myself nodding in agreement. While I did attend my graduations in the requisite robes, I did lead a movement in high school to cancel our prom. Because of this, say my classmates, our senior prom had to be held in a parking building where a car show was being held, and they had to compete for their dates' attention with rare sports car models. No contest, of course.

Were we really that naïve? Did we really believe that by canceling our proms, or attending graduation dressed in the school uniform, we were changing the world? But there were enough naïve and idealistic young people in campuses around the country to actually create such a movement. In other campuses, in UP and the huge institutions along the university belt, it wasn't so much naiveté but militancy. So while colegialas sought to salve their consciences with "immersion" in poor communities and the adoption of simple and unostentatious lifestyles, the militants of UP were barricading all roads to campus and creating the Diliman Republic. (While broadcasting the infamous Dovie Beams tape over the UP radio station.)

* * *

YOU could describe the late 1960s and the early 1970s as a time of ferment and social change. Some have called it the "Youthquake," as the baby boomers reached adolescence and early adulthood and swept up everything, from fashion to religion, music to politics, sexual mores and gender relations, in their wake.

In the Philippines, this youthful revolution was unfolding against a backdrop of an actual armed revolution. Perhaps it was the rise of leftist youth organizations and the New People's Army that lent an air of urgency and impending crisis to the situation. But it is also true that even among the elite and the comfortable bourgeoisie, there was a sense of unease, a realization that a nation stratified into such sharp and rigid divisions of class and economic power could not prevail for long before erupting into chaos and discord.

By way of hindsight, it was the way so many among the young and even the middle-aged took the crisis to heart and made the political personal that makes the years immediately before martial law such a remarkable cultural milestone.

The impact of that wave of social awareness and conscientization goes far beyond the immediate changes wrought by cancelled proms or simplified graduation ceremonies. Traces of that heightened consciousness linger to this day. It is no accident that the leaders of both Edsa I and II belong to the generation of student leaders honed by the First Quarter Storm and the anti-Marcos protests just before and soon after martial law. Every Filipino living in those turbulent times, regardless of whether they're executives, entrepreneurs, politicians, actors, academics or plain citizens today, carries vestiges of this sense of guilt and compulsion to act. Not even 14 years of dictatorship, and 16 years of disillusionment and disappointment, could quell the heightened consciousness forged in those "days of disquiet, nights of rage."

* * *

THE ULTIMATE irony, of course, is that the analysis of the unjust structures of Philippine society, as well as the "isms" that were used to sum up the roots of the "nat sit," are still as valid today as they were then. Not only has skewed income distribution and the chasms between classes remained, they have grown worse.

And as the May 1 riot and march to Malacañang showed, the downtrodden are no longer content to remain underfoot, suffering in silence.

The armed revolution not only failed to meet its strategic objectives, it also ended up devouring its children, many of them tried and executed on mere suspicion of disloyalty. And while the "peaceful" revolutions succeeded in throwing out repressive and corrupt governments, they stopped far short of ushering sweeping change or even initiating political reform.

Meanwhile, where are the warriors of the pre-martial law era? Well into middle age but with one foot still in activism and heart still imbued with idealism, they search for ways to start realizing the vision of Philippine society that so animated their youth, while knowing too well the many barriers that stand in their way. They're wiser and more wary warriors, you might say.

* * *

IF you think about it, it's remarkable how durable this early orientation in social awareness and personal commitment has proven to be. Thirty, even 40 years have passed, after all, but no matter how frustrating and meandering the road to this point has been, the generation forged on the fires of the pre-martial law years has kept its eye on the destination.

The question, of course, is will we ever reach it? Will we succeed when the generation before us seems to have given up? Or will our "war stories" remain the stuff of nostalgia and amusement? Even now, we can't believe we were ever that innocent, that bright eyed, so optimistic and full of hope for ourselves and for our country.

Brownouts and Mabini

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN the lights went out last Wednesday my class was in the middle of a presentation on the memoirs of Emilio Aguinaldo. The problem with being "high-tech" was that we could not view the prepared video. Students in my second class had to do their presentation and comedy skit in the corridor, in full view of people who are not part of the class. It was quite a treat to be out in the sunshine instead of a dark lecture hall where the aircon is set to Siberian cold.

After my classes I sat idly, fanning myself and cracking jokes on the latest "brownout." Some students came to the office and explained that they could not submit their papers on time because there was no power on campus, and no way they could print what they already had on a diskette. Naturally, I was not moved and demanded a more creative excuse. By noon I knew I would not be able to meet my Inquirer deadline. There was no e-mail available, I had a laptop with a fax modem but my battery was dead. Even I could not think of a creative excuse. Why am I useless as a bread toaster without electricity?

At least it was a cloudy day and not so hot. Electricity reappeared at midday, making it possible to at least read the newspapers or check papers. Last Wednesday I wondered aloud what happens to "high-tech" places like the Library of Congress in Washington, the British Library in London, or the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris if they had massive power failure, like us, due to jellyfish. Fortunately, my research is definitely low-tech, my notes were written on cards or notebooks. It is still necessary in the Internet age to visit a library or archive and use my eyes and ears.

Two weeks ago I was in the birthplace of Apolinario Mabini in Talaga, a short distance from Tanauan, Batangas. I was not looking for anything in particular, but I looked through the glass cases again because my last trip there was in 1994. The exhibits were the same: a lock of Mabini's hair (with some pieces of scalp) taken posthumously during an autopsy to determine the true reason for his paralysis; a wooden cane with a silver tip said to have been used during the early stages of his paralysis; a small marble obelisk which he used as a paper weight; a linen handkerchief he presented to a certain Florentina Cesario of Tanauan; his broken eyeglasses and matching leather case; then there are chairs, a wardrobe, a mirror (which I doubt he used because it was of Art Deco design that came after his death), even the original coffin he was buried in before his remains were transferred from the Cementerio del Norte in Manila to the Mabini Shrine in Batangas.

These relics when placed in the context of Mabini's letters, enable me to write about heroes as if they were my childhood playmates. Going to historical sites adds to my arsenal of useless information that can be turned into details in an essay or lecture. Descendants of the hero live behind the shrine. Once upon a time the curator of the shrine was a nephew of the hero aptly named Apolinario "Ka Pule" Mabini, son of Alejandro Mabini. When I first met him in the 1980s he was a chubby fellow with a ready smile. In 1994 he was thin, bedridden and then resembled his famous ascetic uncle. Ka Pule had few anecdotes aside from the details regarding the original nipa hut that once stood on the grounds of the shrine near a chico tree. According to him, the house had a cogon thatch roof and *kakawate* posts. These facts don't bring a historian very far, but I cannot help but compare this humble shrine with the birthplace of Rizal in Calamba or that of Aguinaldo in Kawit. Sitting under the shade of an old acacia tree outside the shrine, I recalled Mabini's last will and testament written in Guam in 1902 that reads in part:

"I, Apolinario Mabini, legitimate son of Inocencio Mabini and Dionisia Maranan expound the following:

"In case, because of the ailment I have been suffering, I should die, I have decided to express here my last will to my brothers, who are my nearest of kin still living. I hope this document, despite its private character, shall merit the respect of all my brothers as my last will.

"I hereby declare that I do not have vast properties to leave; nevertheless, I request that what little I leave behind, whatever it may be, should be given to my brother Prudencio Mabini, as a remembrance from me in consideration of the care that he has given me during my sickness and in sharing my suffering and hardships.

"I beg my brothers not to be offended with this arrangement, since I cannot find any other worthy means to reward the services of the above-mentioned. Prudencio, please understand that I would not mind being ill or even dying if I had some wealth to bequeath to you that would serve as remembrance to all those from whom I owe favors. Since this is God's will, let us be resigned to it..."

These rather depressing words were written by a man who didn't have much to leave behind aside from a famous name. There was a time when he was the closest trusted adviser of Aguinaldo. All papers that needed the president's signature or attention passed through Mabini who, more than anyone else, knew what *sic transit gloria mundi* really meant.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Life's chances

COMMENTARY

Natalia M.L.M. Morales

DURING the first quarter of this year, Presidential Commission on Good Government Commissioner Haydee Yorac gave a stirring message to the le crème of the UP Diliman studentry. The occasion was the annual joint recognition of the honor societies based in the University of the Philippines' flagship campus. These are the Pi Gamma Mu International Social Science Honor Society, the Phi Sigma of the biological sciences and the multidisciplinary Honor Society of the Phi Kappa Phi. They continue a tradition of honoring excellence as part of the value formation of life in the state's premier tertiary school.

Yorac's speech focused on the debacle of corruption in national life. What could be a better audience than the starry-eyed, morally idealistic honorees (many came with their parents). There is something about the young that makes them staunch allies of the crusade against corruption. The latter comes in various shapes, hues and carriers. Corruption costs the country billions of pesos in drained resources, demoralization, inefficiency. Truly, it thwarts development efforts. Material wealth gets depleted and saps the poorest and most vulnerable, not to mention their human rights get violated. Corruption attacks both the natural and social environments as well as efforts at good governance.

RP rank

In a recent survey of Transparency International, an NGO dedicated to understanding and combating corruption, Yorac cites the former's Global Corruption Report. It allots 91 positions in the Corruption Perception Index. The Philippines ranked No. 65 together with African countries Senegal and Zimbabwe and the Latin Guatemala. The Philippines scored 2.9 (10 is highly clean and 0 is highly corrupt).

Other Asean countries—Malaysia and Thailand—outranked the Philippines. Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea are considered "cleaner" governments by such standards. Indonesia and Vietnam however posted lower ranks than the Philippines in the index.

Ironically, a study by the National University of Singapore also shows that the Philippines has the most number of laws defining corruption with commensurate penalties. This is clear in the Constitution that underscores public office to be a public trust. Public officers and employees are always accountable to the people they serve. Their service requires them to abide by the principles of responsibility, integrity (including transparency), loyalty and efficiency. The offices of the Ombudsman and Sandiganbayan have been tasked with the enforcement of laws against corrupt and irresponsible officials.

Regrettably, Yorac laments that out of so many cases filed against public officials only 2 percent result in conviction (five out of every 10,000 cases; Hong Kong's ratio is 8/10,000 cases, but its population is less than one-tenth of the Philippines). With so many unsolved or pending cases, injustice is more felt than confronted. The snail-paced procedures cause public apathy as well as instability. How many crimes have been committed in the name of unmitigated court backlog?

The other side of her message was made offstage. I asked her why the government is often the butt of corruption charges. The good commissioner points to the perks of public office—allowances, the right to contract out projects, free travel grants and other forms of entitlements. Of course, there are government agencies where these are most pronounced than the others. But still, something is missed out in dissecting the anatomy of corruption

Where it involves money and the accumulation of unlawful wealth, much has been said and tracked down of corruption. Even the sophistication of the Marcos loot is not lost on us. But a more insidious type is the moral robbery and deprivation by the strong of life's chances of the weak—the disenfranchised, the poor and the unlearned. They are those easily intimidated by the show of sheer force and authority outside the rule of reason. Irrational power-wielders manifest to the extreme what political scientist Harold Lasswell put so objectively about the power game "Who gets what, when and how?" If the power-wielders are at all times accountable to the people, serve with utmost responsibility, integrity, loyalty and efficiency as Yorac categorically states, then there is no problem. But if they are ruled by their love for power and position, mindless of the effects of decisions capriciously arrived at times, continue to be blind and manage the situation as they see fit even with injustice, that society and governance are at great risk. It is more sinister especially if life's fair chances are robbed of the worthy and deserving. They who made a choice in life but are not allowed to enjoy it. This could be done by the rigging of rules, lack of transparency in procedures, fraudulence of facts and circumstances. In short, corruption by those whom society presumes to be rightful and learned can be most subtle, even hard to detect. But it is much part of the picture and perhaps is the most dangerous of the "corrupt" forms.

Con game

Fraudulence and corruption from such end warp and violate blatantly the human spirit. It could be expressed by one's identity, name, aspiration, work, legacy and welfare. Blocking and smearing of the same by reason of one's power and position are not only unlawful but highly unethical. Isn't it the case that corruption at the higher, sophisticated level has been described as a "con" game? This is so because of two things. Either one has been robbed of the essential element of civility—trust, confidence and self worth. Or the perpetrator, soon to be caught and unmasked, will be declared a convict whom society has to punish and help reform.

In such cases, oven enterprises that don't thrive on money alone can also become captives of the game of corruption. Schools and churches, venerable institutions as they are, are not free from the frailty and perversions of the human spirit. Reports in the media and topics in public fora have addressed the shenanigans of purportedly "respectable" citizens and entities of the community. Sadly, wily foxes and hoodlums garbed in robes of their institutions move around in comfort.

It is a great "letdown" and danger to society that they can go scot-free and provide dubious models to those with whom they interact. Perhaps there is a need for the principle of check and balance to be exercised. Not only in our democratic governance but in the conduct of our social lives.

To cap her challenge to the fair hope of the fatherland, Yorac underscores what an effective anti-corruption program must be. This would combine good rules defining and punishing corruption; efficient procedures for quick enforcement of the rules, strong institutions which have adequate powers; intelligent, honest and dedicated officials in these institutions. Most importantly, a citizenry that would not tolerate corrupt acts and practices is a major deterrent.

As a new school year is once more in the offing, there should be more to the courses on Good Manners and Right Conduct as well as Civics in our schools. Integrate their reasons and values in the entire curriculum and got out of the vicious cycle of corruption fast!

Natalia M.L.M. Morales presently chairs the Public Affairs Committee of the UP Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. E-mail her at nataliam91@hotmail.com.

Serves them right

FRANKLY speaking, we don't care a whit whatever the rabid pro-Estrada propagandists (Ninez Cacho-Olivares, Amado Macasaet, Herman Tiu Laurel, Angelito Banayo and Horacio Paredes) are saying all the way to the Supreme Court. To President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her favorite generals, we actually want to say: *Buti nga sa inyo.*

The coup d'état charge against Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes is the logical outcome of President Macapagal's stubborn insistence that the Supreme Court and the military were the decisive factors in President Joseph Estrada's removal from office and her assumption to power.

It is a by-product of Ms Macapagal's utter contempt for the Filipino people's sovereign will as expressed in the nationwide uprising now known as People Power II. Now, Ms Macapagal's false sense of gratitude and her rewriting of history haunt her and her generals.

The President should be the first one to defend her generals since she was the one who put them on a pedestal and miscast them as the supposed heroes of the events that transpired between Jan. 16 and 20, 2001.

To prove the legitimacy of her reign, Ms Macapagal relies mainly on the Supreme Court's decision to declare the presidency vacant and crown her as the President. This and the military's conditional defection—remember their asking for a million people to come to Edsa before leaving Estrada's side?—have been obviously bloated while the Filipino people's role was airbrushed to suit Ms Macapagal's taste and her rather baseless assertion that what happened was a constitutional act.

Ms Macapagal's cavalier attitude toward People Power II was obvious when her lawyers argued before the Supreme Court that what occurred was a constitutional handover of power and not a people's s uprising.

The President also showed it during People Power II's first anniversary when she deployed thousands of military troops to the Edsa Shrine and approved setting up barricades to prevent the people from celebrating their victory.

**—TEODORO A. CASIÑO,
secretary general, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, 23 Maamo St., Sikatuna Village, Quezon City**

Generals came and stayed the night

THIS is to correct the wrong impression created by the inaccurate reporting of your PDI Visayas correspondent, titled "They came, saw, but didn't stay," (PDI, 5/13/02) regarding the ferry sinking in Biliran.

At about 6 p.m. of May 11 (the tragedy occurred at about 4:30 p.m.), presidential assistant for Eastern Visayas Vic Domingo informed Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, commanding general of the Army's 8th Infantry Division, of the incident. At that time, he was with Maj. Gen. Jacinto Ligot, commander of the Central Command, AFP visiting troops in Northern Samar. As the rescue helicopters were not capable of night flight missions, the Comcentcom directed the Naval Forces Central to send a ship to the incident while the Coast Guard, 8ID ordered the dispatch of medical and security elements who arrived at Biliran before midnight. They were led by Col. Eusebio Ramos, 802nd Bde Comdr.

At the break of dawn, scheduled troop visits were cut short as the military officers onboard the helicopters proceeded to Biliran to undertake search, rescue and recovery operations. The rescue helicopter, with Ligot onboard, hovered over the site of the incident before finally landing in the Naval wharf at about 6:15 a.m.

On the ground, Maj. Romeo Argenio of the 19th Infantry Battalion and board member Romulo Bernardez of Naval, appraised the military officers of the situation and reported that all 94 passengers have been accounted for to wit: 19 dead, 10 hospitalized and 65 escaped unharmed. This notwithstanding, the SAR helicopter was dispatched to fetch, rescue divers and equipment from the Mactan Air Base to complement the efforts of divers of the Philippine Coast Guard, and to ferry ranking government officials from Cebu to Biliran. Ligot and Dominguez remained in the island and conferred with local executives on succeeding actions. Thereafter, the military officials returned to the wharf to discuss the incident with PCG officials.

With the pullout of the rescue divers from the incident site at about 9 a.m., Ligot proceeded with the Southern Leyte-Bohol leg of the scheduled inspection while the division brigade and battalion commanders remained to supervise the termination of search, rescue and recovery operations. Dominguez left Biliran at around 11 a.m. for the five-hour land trip to Catbalogan.

—CAPT. CONSTANCIO M. ESPINA II (Inf.), PA, pubic information officer, 8th Infantry Division, Philippine Army, Camp Lukban, Catbalogan, Samar

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I WRITE in response to the comments of Major Generals Jacinto Ligot and Romeo Dominguez related to the item I wrote about their visit to Naval aboard two Air Force helicopters in the morning of Sunday, May 12.

I was in the crowd at the portion of the Naval wharf near the MT Nilode, bottled up by the Army security cordon, when military officials landed on board the Sikorsky rescue helicopter around 6:30 a.m. Before their arrival, I was taking pictures of the half-sunk boat that had been docked at the wharf.

The military officials were met and briefed by Gov. Rogelio Espina and a provincial board member near the helicopter landing site. I did not see Rep. Gerardo Espina there.

Somebody then pulled what I saw as a military map and pointed to the location where the boat sunk. Minutes later, the officials boarded the helicopter that took off shortly.

The whole episode that I witnessed did not last 30 minutes.

The other helicopter, a Huey, just flew up in the air and did not land at all in the wharf.

My original dispatch did not include the names of the visiting military officials. But when requested by the PDI Visayas Bureau, I called up both Governor Espina and Representative Espina separately, and they provided me the complete names of these officials and their stations.

I only witnessed and wrote about the helicopter landing on the Naval wharf and verified what I saw through running commentaries of Representative Espina over the local radio most of Sunday morning.

I saw a flying white Sikorsky helicopter on my way out of the house to file my report around mid-morning. But I thought it was the chopper that transported Presidential Assistant Gabby Claudio and Rep. Prospero Pichay to Naval.

Anyway, there was no more need for outside help and attention by Sunday morning. The local population and officials had completed their own voluntary search and rescue operations the evening before and had taken care of the dead and the survivors.

**—ROLANDO O. BORRINAGA,
PDI Visayas Bureau**

LETTERS

Five big pluses for Singapore

DO we wonder why a tiny country like Singapore is way ahead of us? When I was there I learned first hand what makes that city state a nation to be reckoned with and to emulate. To start with, the different ethnic groups composed of Malays, Chinese, Indians and other minorities live in harmony. Tolerance of their differences predominate. They are united behind their leaders working for the common good. Second, crimes are punishable by either death or caning, the authorities do not fool around with wrongdoers in that country, hence a low crime rate. Third, trash is recycled and incinerated. No piles of garbage can be seen strewn around the city. Here, we say no to incinerators and yet allow the burning of garbage in our backyards! Fourth, traffic is minimal. Most of their major thoroughfares are one way, the streets have all the appropriate traffic aids and traffic signals are functioning. No gridlocks occur because intersections are kept clear at all times. Motorists stay in their lanes therefore traffic flows smoothly. Most of their automobiles are compact, none of the big vans and SUVs seen on the streets of Metro Manila. Most commute by bus, metrorail or motorcycles. However smoke-belching and worn-out buses are not allowed, unlike those plying our streets. No jeeps and tricycles to crowd the streets either, and so no pollution to speak of. And fifth, since tourism is a major boost to the economy, they spared no effort in developing their infrastructures and tourist attractions. Changi International Airport is world-class, one of the best in the region and the world. The ground crews of their flagship Singapore Airlines are efficient, helpful and courteous. Accordingly they get about 7 million visitors a year on the average. Worth mentioning too are the foreign investments that have poured into the country.

Thus, we see why it is ahead of the Asean countries, including our own. Nonetheless, there is no reason why we can 't do the same in this country. All it takes is an unwavering political will and an intense desire to effect a change. But change can only come through the implementation of laws and self-discipline on the part of the government and the people themselves.

—MILAGROS KLEIST, 70 F. Binictican Dr., Subic Bay Freeport, Olongapo City

What do you think of the coup charges?

(INQ7 Voices is a weekly round-up of comments selected from those posted by thousands of Filipinos, here and overseas, on the Discussion message boards of INQ7.net, the online news website of the INQUIRER and GMA-7. To participate, register at http://discussions.inq7.net/)

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

THEY (generals charged with the coup) had two choices: first, to withdraw support from Estrada, which they wisely did with dignity and integrity, or, second, to continue protecting and supporting a corrupt and immoral president who was supported by opposition senators who lied to the nation and the people.

How dare they (the accusers) try to bring her down while they protect and support a corrupt and immoral president like Erap. They obviously do not care what is right and good for the country.**—JUSTICE4RP2001**

* * *

I am not an Erap fanatic, but if you overthrow a corrupt president...don't put another one! Erap was toppled because of this lowly thing called *"jueteng,"* but this *"jueteng"* is very much alive to this very minute and run by no other than the accuser himself, Chavit Singson.

Mutiny, an honest and moral thing to do? Look for the meaning of "MUTINY' in Webster's dictionary *kung hindi ka ba naman bobo!*
—Easy

* * *

He (Reyes) did advice Erap. And he didn't listen, so there you go....he lost the job!

The problem with Erap is, he thinks he can run the country mafioso style. Drugs, gambling, extra-judicial killings, women and sex are the ingredients of his menu for management during those times. The issues of the day from newspaper accounts only evolve on those very narrow subjects. The economy was totally forgotten. Instead, he chooses to blame previous administrations for the poor economic performance under his stewardship when the buck should have stopped right there in his own office. Never mind the Asian currency crisis gripping the region then. The blame game was the order of the day instead of actions that can help solve problems. Blame the media, blame the newspapers, blame Ramos, blame the foreign media, blame the business community, even blame advertisements in newspapers. When your management style is centered on blaming others, such is a sign of real incompetence on the job. And the people had noticed that.

For me, he failed miserably and big time in his duty as a president. Never mind who had replaced him. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is just a consequence since she is the vice president during that time. Whoever happened to be vice president during the Edsa II uprising would be the president by now. And thanks to these generals who had acted according to their conscience. Had they been greedy, they could have taken the opportunity and grabbed power for themselves. But they did not. A good sign that there is hope after all.

As an ordinary citizen, choosing between these generals and the likes of Lacson, Honasan, Enrile and their cohorts, I would prefer the former. **—jruz jr.**

* * *

Having failed in their attempts to turn upside down the judicial system in order to give their idol Erap an avenue of escape for his criminal shenanigans, these salivating pups think they can put one over Pinoys by using a legal strategy to undo what their idol himself did to himself while he was still in power, and that is, kick himself out from the presidency!

Unfortunately for these unthinking buffoons, their strategy is not working and may yet visit perdition to other Erap supporters before this story is ended. **—Rolly S.**

* * *

Gen. Angelo Reyes and the conspirators' withdrawal of support from the duly constituted authority is an act of mutiny. Based on his testimony before the Commission on Appointments, he admitted a coup d'état had taken place some time in January 2001. That the Edsa Dos generals decided to stage a coup in order to topple an immoral and corrupt leader is baloney. What moral duty are they talking about? General Reyes and his allies are part of a corrupt institution.

Game of the Generals: **—Diego AKS**

Rationale for TV report on 'askals'

THE "I-WITNESS" episode referred to by Oscar Lei in his letter printed on May 20 was titled, "Askal for asong kalye," the intention of which was to investigate the plight of *askals* in Philippine society. It was shown last April 15 between 11 p.m. to 12 midnight.

The first segment documented the actual slaughter of an *askal* in Balintawak, Quezon City. No, it was not staged as the letter-sender thought. The killing, cooking, selling and eating of dog meat is a daily occurrence in that squatter community. In fact, the slaughter we documented was the second for that day. And it is said that dog slaughtering is actually commonplace and arrests are rare, despite the ban promulgated during the Ramos administration. We'd like to think the episode had something to do with the arrest of a dog butcher in Malabon reported in Saksi the next day.

The second segment featured the rows of dog meat sold in a market in Baguio and the rows of restaurants where dog meat was served. An Ibaloy explained how eating dog meat is part of their tradition, respected and appreciated even better than eating lechon or other pork dishes. Young girls of this tribe, when interviewed, spoke of enjoying the dish.

The third segment featured one of the three dog pounds in Metro Manila and showed how dogs—which were not claimed by owners—were gassed or killed through injection because the local government could not take care of them. The segment showed the basic attitude of our society toward dogs in general. Twenty dogs were caught daily by each of the six teams in the dog pound.

Finally, the fourth segment featured people who love dogs and focused on a farmer whose *askal* was his workmate and best friend. He even claimed dogs are better than children because children sometimes betray their parents while dogs never will, if you take care of them properly.

That the structure itself was from violence to gentleness was the episode's statement: that dogs deserve to be treated with kindness, compassion and dignity.

Throughout the episode, the opinions of Ms Paula Popple, a representative of the Philippine Animal Welfare Society(PAWS) were heard in a discourse with other opinions such as from the Ibaloy, who defended their tradition, and from Dr. Michael Tan, an anthropologist, who explained that among poor Filipinos, dogs are considered as lower beings and thus, they may not find contradiction with having their dogs as pet one day, their meal, the next day. Paola's interview was gentle yet strong, espousing the worldview the complainant was looking for without being antagonistic.

Vicky Morales, the show's host is a dog lover herself and it was shown how her dogs were part of her family. The final assessment was that the fate of our *askals* was also dependent on the improvement of the lives of our people. But human beings are higher beings and are capable of compassion. Our call in the conclusion of the documentary: it is really up to us if our *askals* will be butchered or become our best friends.

Contrary to what Mr. Lei wrote, the episode had a stand against dog slaughtering and dog eating. But its style was persuasive, not judgmental and condemnatory.

As to the violence, the slaughter, which was solarized to lessen the impact, was shown not to highlight the violence but because we felt it was necessary for understanding the issue. More than the actual killing, what caught our attention, was how the community, men, women and children regard these killings with both fear and glee, and then partake of the meat with such relish.

We have always believed that the role of media was to reflect society, for the viewers to act on that reflection and not to shoot the mirror or the messenger.

It was one case of violence used to make a point and we hope that it would push our viewers to be more vigilant in protesting cruelty to animals.

—ELLEN ONGKEKO-MARFIL, production unit manager for public affairs, GMA News and Public Affairs, GMA Network Center

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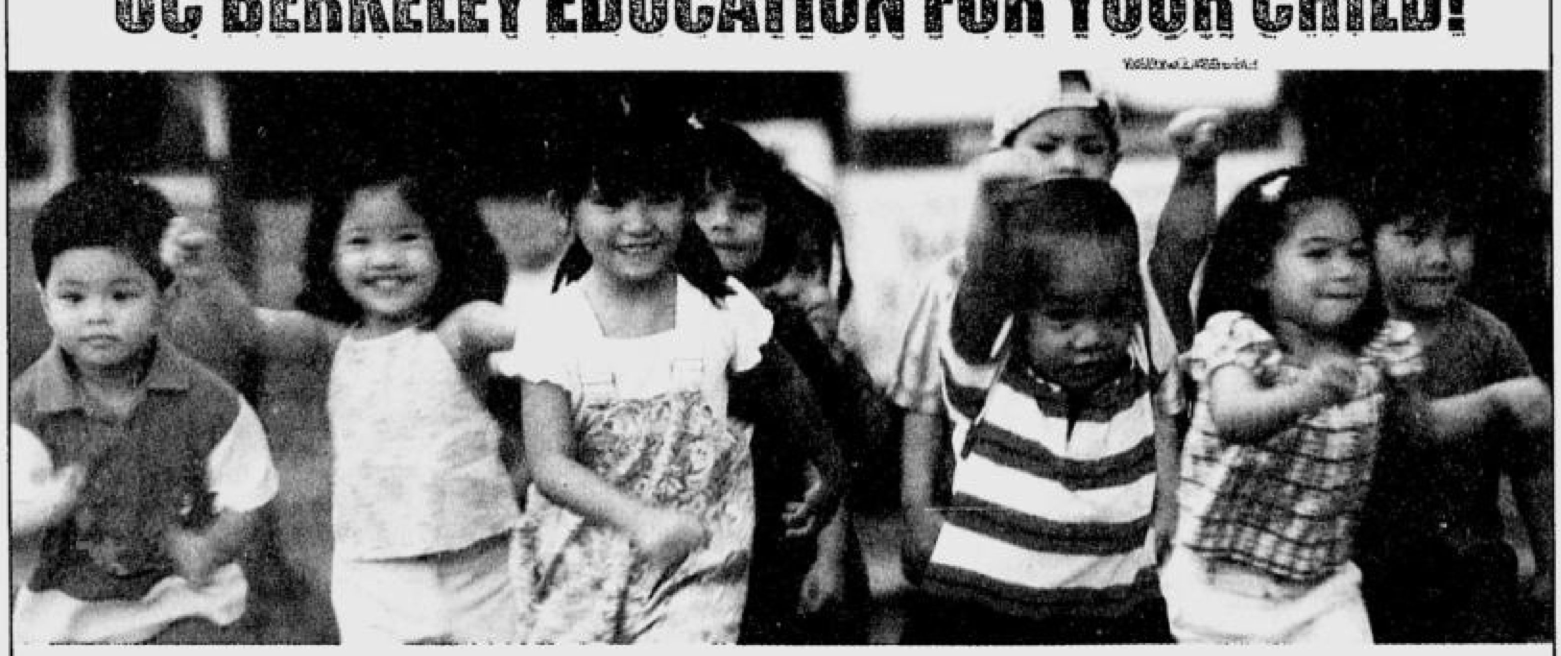

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GSIS suspends 2 lawyers for leading protests

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PRESIDENT and general manager of the Government Service Insurance System has cracked the whip on employees demanding his ouster.

Winston Garcia yesterday issued a 90-day preventive suspension order against two GSIS lawyers who had been participating in the series of protest actions against Garcia's alleged abusive policies and mismanagement of the state-run pension fund.

"They've already gone overboard," Garcia said. "I've already warned them that as GSIS lawyers, they should not participate in the protest actions."

Garcia also threatened to file administrative charges against five other GSIS employees for participating in "unauthorized protest actions."

The employees were Paz Olarte and Felicidad Songco of the housing department, Ronnie Echavez and Beth Reyes of the legal department, and Danny Sambrano, spokesperson of the Kapisanan ng mga Manggagawa sa GSIS (KMG).

In a memorandum, Garcia said lawyers Albert Velasco and Mario Molina committed grave misconduct when they "directly and continuously helped some alleged disgruntled employees to conduct concerted protest actions" against the GSIS management.

The offense of grave misconduct carries the penalty of dismissal.

Velasco and Molina's participation in the rallies also betrayed the "confidential nature" of their positions as GSIS lawyers, Garcia said in the memorandum.

The KMG yesterday described the suspension orders as "tyrannical . . . clearly meant to cow the free government workers into submission."

"This is an outright harassment," Velasco yesterday told the INQUIRER. "We've been holding the rallies since March 14. Why is he (Garcia) complaining just now?"

Velasco said he and Molina would go to the Civil Service Commission to contest their suspension.

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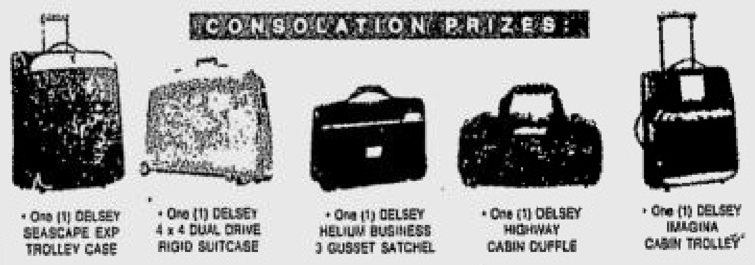

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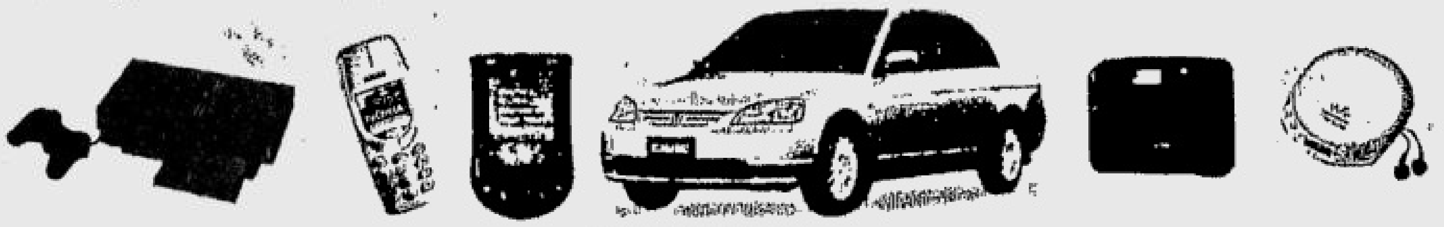

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

India PM tells troops: Prepare for action

NEW DELHI/ISLAMABAD—India's prime minister meets his security advisers in disputed Kashmir Thursday after telling troops confronting Pakistani forces to prepare for action after a week of cross-border firing.

Atal Behari Vajpayee, on a three-day visit to the state at the root of two of the three wars between the South Asian neighbors, has sent extra troops to India's border with Pakistan and extra warships to the Arabian Sea off its coast.

Pakistan, which has repeatedly called for talks, explicitly pledged for the first time on Wednesday to stop cross-border raids by Islamic militants from all areas under its control.

But with the nuclear-armed nations trading bellicose warnings and cross-border fire, the United States and its European allies were working behind the scenes to stop the two sides slipping back into war.

"The message clearly to everyone is that it is a dangerous situation and that our hope and all of our efforts are aimed at encouraging them to lessen the tension along the border, both in Kashmir and elsewhere," US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told reporters in Washington on Wednesday.

Rumsfeld said he had spoken to Indian Defense Minister George Fernandes and expected to talk to him again soon.

Department of State officials echoed Rumsfeld's concern.

"What we want to do right now is to prevent a war," one senior official told reporters.

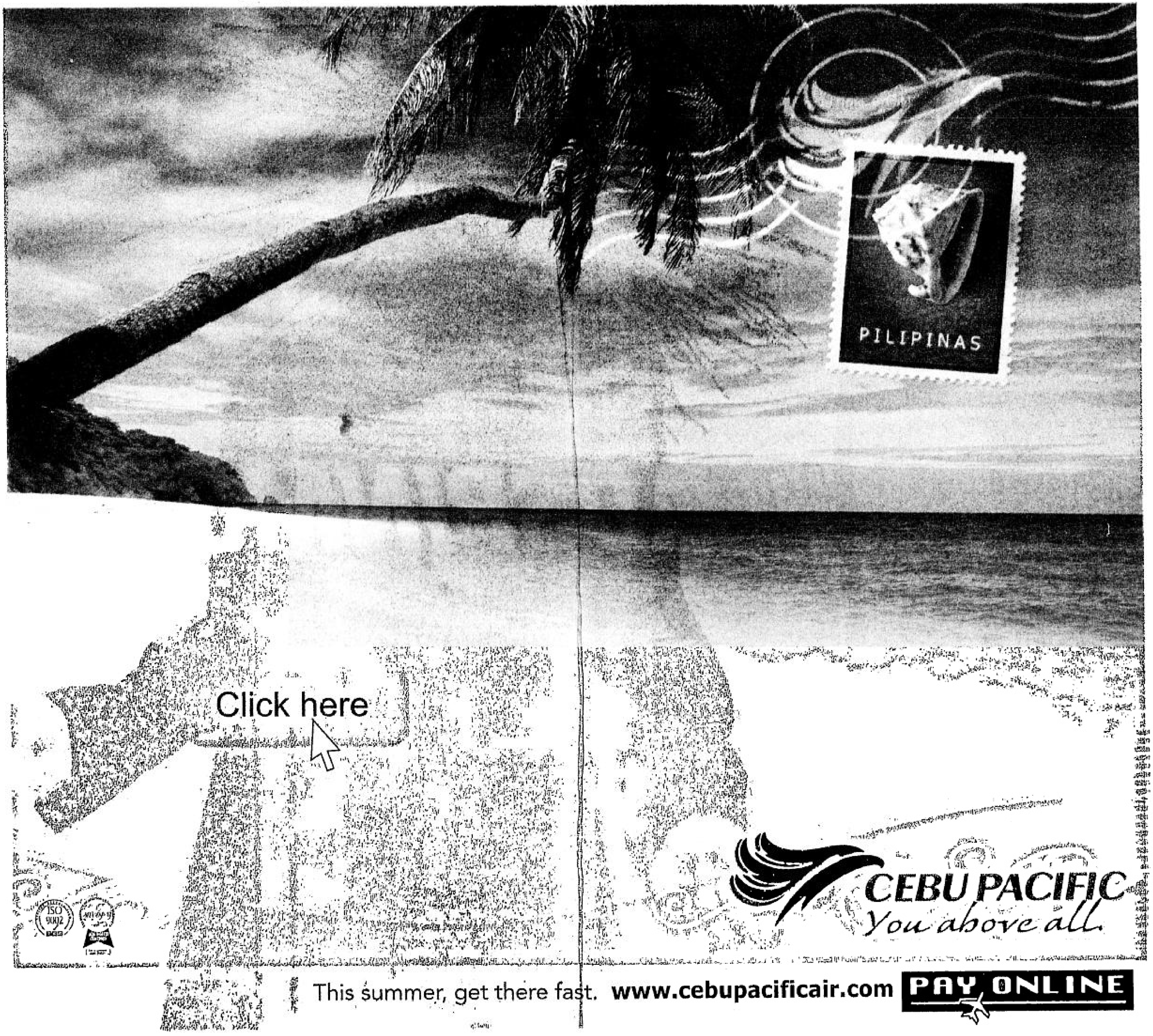
India blames Pakistan for attacks by Islamic militants in Kashmir, its only Muslim-majority state, and further afield. A December attack on the Indian parliament in the capital New Delhi triggered the latest military standoff between the rivals.

Vajpayee, who meets his security advisers in Indian-controlled Kashmir's main city of Srinagar, told his troops on Wednesday to prepare for action.

"Be prepared for sacrifices. But our aim should be victory.

Because it's now time for a decisive fight," Vajpayee said in a speech broadcast live across the nation by state television. *Reuters*

AN INDIAN Army soldier aims his gun, as he keeps watch on the Indo-Pakistan border, about 30 km from Amritsar in Northern Punjab state May 23. REUTERS



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Suicide bomber kills 2 in Israel public garden

RISHON LETZION, Israel—A Palestinian suicide bomber struck in an Israeli public garden full of chess and backgammon players, killing two others and wounding 27, hours after Israeli missiles blasted a top Palestinian militant.

The bombing in Rishon Letzion was the second suicide attack there in two weeks and the second in an Israeli town in three days, breaking a lull since an Army offensive last month in the West Bank aimed at neutralizing bombers.

Israel's defense minister said in an interview before the most recent bombing that the only way to stop such attacks was through peace talks, although the military campaign had succeeded in reducing "terror activity."

"You can minimize it, but (stop it) completely, no," Binyamin Ben-Eliezer said. "The only way to conclude that is through talks, through negotiations, through understanding between the two peoples that the time has come."

Hours after the latest attack, Israeli forces raided two West Bank villages where they arrested 22 people, including nine suspected militants wanted by the Israeli security forces.

After the first Rishon Letzion attack, Israel prepared to storm the nearby Gaza Strip but did not do so due to international pressure to give peace efforts a chance and concern by generals the planned operation was too risky.

It was not clear whether the military campaign against Gaza was back on the cards, although local radio stations quoted security sources as saying they preferred to retaliate with pinpointed strikes against militants.

On the political front, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon faced a crisis in his coalition government after he dismissed two allied ultra-Orthodox parties who refused to vote for emergency austerity measures prompted by soaring military spending.

The parties were officially fired early on Thursday as dismissal letters took effect after a 48-hour cooling off period. **Reuters**

Israel Embassy in Paris destroyed by intense fire

PARIS—The Israeli Embassy in Paris was destroyed by an intense fire early on Thursday and officials said it was too early to determine the cause.

Israeli ambassador Elie Barnavi said it was most probably an accident but more investigation was needed. The building was undergoing renovation work.

"We don't rule anything out," Barnavi told Israel Radio when asked whether terrorism was suspected.

"The investigation has not yet began. The police are here of course but they have not yet been able to enter the building. The initial assumption is that it was caused by an electric fault, but the investigation will only begin in the morning."

The blaze broke out at about 2 a.m. and 150 firefighters brought it under control in about two hours. Six firemen were injured. There were no injuries in the embassy.

"The embassy is totally destroyed," Paris police chief Jean-Paul Proust told reporters. "At this moment, we have no indication of the cause of this fire."

Barnavi said nothing remained but the build's façade.

"Basically there is no embassy anymore. That is the story, everything that was inside has been destroyed. The only thing that remains is outside of the building . . . everything we had, all our memory, our computers have gone," he said on Israel Radio.

A recent wave of anti-Semitic attacks in France, including a threatening letter containing a bullet sent to Barnavi last month, has heightened concern about any incidents related to Jewish sites here.

"Everything concerning Israel is serious at this time," said Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, who rushed to the scene with his Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy. President Jacques Chirac telephoned Barnavi to express his concern. **Reuters**

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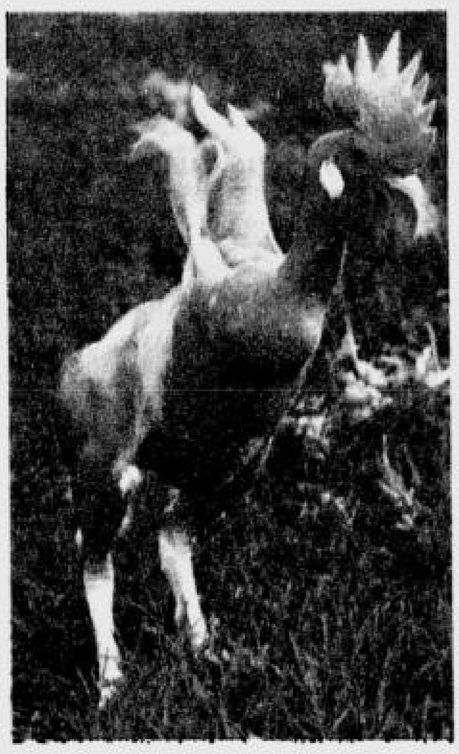

UNDRESSED REUTERS

An eight-month old featherless rooster weighing 3.3kg flaps its wings May 22 at the Hebrew University in Rehovot. Scientists at the university have genetically engineered bare-skinned chickens as part of a research project to develop succulent, low fat poultry that is environmentally friendly.

Japanese deaths from overwork hit record high

TOKYO—Japan, famed as a nation of workaholics, said on Wednesday the number of deaths from overwork—known as "karoshi"—leapt 68 percent to a record 143 in the year ended in March.

A survey conducted by the Health Ministry showed the number of work-related deaths stemming from stress, mental disorder or depression nearly doubled to 70 in 2001/02 (April/March) from the pervious year.

Of the total, 31 were suicides.

Health ministry officials said the number of deaths from overwork could continue to rise as Japanese companies shift from the traditional life-time employment system to a wage-system based on merit rather than seniority that is resulting in people putting in longer and longer hours to try to keep their jobs.

Of those who died of overwork in 2001/02—133 men and 10 women—49 were in their 50s and 38 in their 40s.

"We fear that the number of 'karoshi' may continue to increase partly because work-related pressure is likely to build up on workers," a ministry official said.

The official attributed the surge in the number of officially recognized "karoshi," the largest since the ministry first carried out the survey in 1987, mainly to changes in standards by which labor inspectors study the link between overwork and death. **Reuters**

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Congress subpoenas W. House for Enron records

WASHINGTON—A US Senate committee on Wednesday subpoenaed the White House's records of its interactions with Enron Corp., and the White House turned over some material showing numerous contacts with former Enron Chair Kenneth Lay.

In a 9-8 party-line vote, the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee approved the first congressional subpoenas of the Bush administration. They were requested by committee Chair Sen. Joseph Lieberman, a Connecticut Democrat and potential 2004 election challenger to Republican President George W. Bush.

The move escalated Congress' battle with the administration over the reach of their respective powers. Lieberman said he was forced to act after the White House stalled on his two-month-old request for information about its ties with now-bankrupt Enron.

Later on Wednesday, White House counsel Alberto Gonzales sent Lieberman seven pages of material detailing some White House interactions with Enron, and said he expected to make more information available "as further work is completed."

But administration officials insisted they had intended to release the information even before the subpoenas were issued.

The material revealed many links with former Enron chief Lay, who was a major Bush campaign contributor and served on a transition committee that searched for people to fill energy-related positions in the administration.

"Mr. Lay recommended a total of 21 individuals for appointment in the administration, of whom only three ultimately received appointments," said the White House document, a summary of Enron contacts submitted by Gonzales.

Lieberman's spokesperson said the senator was not satisfied with the White House submission, noting that Gonzales' letter said he was releasing only material that was "ready for disclosure."

"It appears that the White House is still providing only what it thianks is relevant, rather than what the committee asked it for," spokesperson Leslie Phillips said.

Before the subpoena vote, Lieberman denied he was accusing the White House of anything, but said information was needed to see if the government could have prevented the Enron debacle.

"I have finally concluded that we were being slow-walked . . . at least, and stonewalled at worst," Lieberman said.

Republicans accused the committee's Democratic majority of conducting a fishing expedition aimed at pinning the blame for Enron's collapse on the Republican Bush administration.

"There has been no indication that the executive office of the president has had any involvement in any of these matters," said ranking Republican Sen. Fred Thompson of Tennessee. "This is nothing more than a decision to have a look-see to see if something might possibly turn up."

The two subpoenas, which went to the offices of Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, ordered disclosure by June 3 of any contacts with Enron concerning eight agencies that regulate corporations and energy, or concerning Bush's energy plan.

The White House said it was perplexed by the subpoenas, and said it was cooperating with Lieberman. "They have issued a subpoena without even having a chance to review the information that we're sending," Bush spokesperson Ari Fleischer said.

"Our inquiry disclosed no instance in which Enron approached anyone in the executive office of the president for financial help prior to their bankruptcy," Fleischer added.

The material Gonzales released showed Lay attended meetings with administration officials up to and including Bush, who dropped in on a gathering of about 20 business leaders that included Lay on Feb. 7, 2001.

Lay and Enron's chief Washington lobbyist Linda Robertson also met the executive director of the administration's task force on energy policy on Feb. 22, 2001, and they had a half-hour meeting with Cheney on April 17—a session the vice president already has acknowledged. *Reuters*

US to launch international children adoption program

WASHINGTON—Americans who want to adopt a child abroad could get government confirmation that the child is an orphan under a program the top immigration official wants to begin in July.

Immigration and Naturalization Commissioner James Ziglar announced the experimental program Wednesday at a House hearing on international adoptions.

The hearing was the first to investigate the INS decision to stop issuing visas last December for Cambodian children adopted by Americans.

The decision triggered an angry outcry from prospective adoptive parents and some of their congressional members, who said their constituents were innocent victims.

INS and the state department are investigating the pending adoptions of Cambodian children. Ziglar said their investigation found birth parents were being misled "about the realities of leaving their children in orphanages." He said they have found some documents contain false information about the child's origin or circumstances under which the child was abandoned or became an orphan.

Ziglar said he hopes the voluntary, experimental program he will start in July will prevent adoptive parents from learning they can't bring their children to the United States after adoption.

"The lessons learned from what we did in Cambodia are huge," Ziglar told members of the House International Relations Committee. "Suspension (of visas) ought to be the last resort in any situation we have."

International adoptions by Americans have increased steadily each year during the last decade. Mary Ryan, assistant secretary of state for consular affairs, said Americans adopt more children from abroad than do citizens of all other countries combined. *AP*

Granny who rekindled mercy killing debate in Australia commits suicide

CRICK in a March 2002 photo at a Brisbane news conference.
REUTERS

SYDNEY—A frail cancer-stricken grandmother whose appeals to die at a time of her choosing rekindled Australian debate on mercy killing has committed suicide, supporters said Thursday.

Nancy Crick, 70, died peacefully on Wednesday at her home in Queensland state, pro-euthanasia campaigner Dr. Philip Nitschke said.

Nitschke, who was not present when Crick died but saw her on Wednesday, said she took a fatal dose of drugs followed by a glass of liquor and a cigarette. She was suffering from bowel cancer.

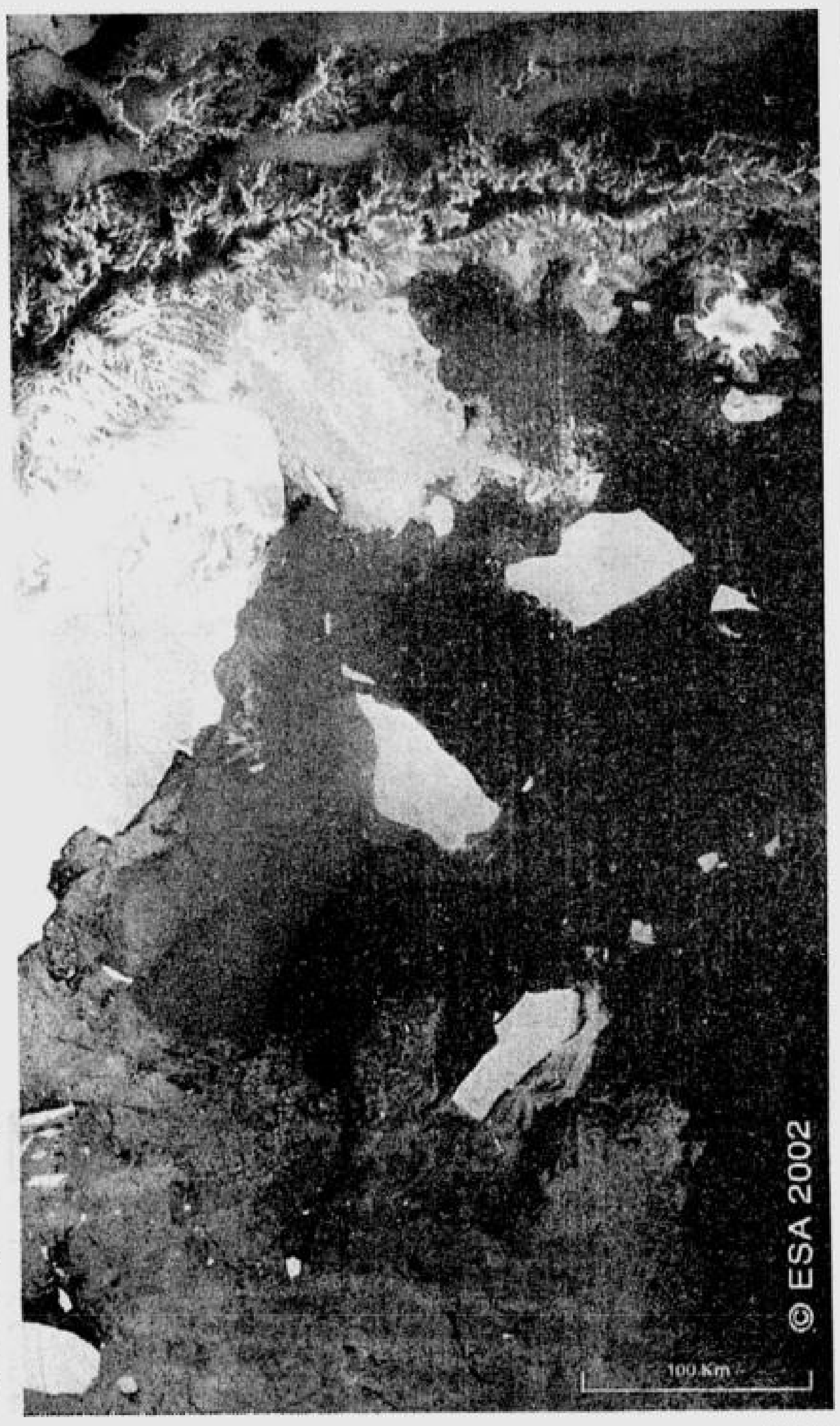
Nitschke described her as a martyr for the euthanasia cause.

"She only hopes that she's gone through this for a reason," he said. "She went through hell really in the last few months."

About 20 friends and family members were present when she died and they all could be charged with assisting her suicide—an offense that carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Crick became a prominent right-to-die campaigner earlier this year when she began an Internet diary chronicling her pain-wracked life and desire to die.

In her last entry, dated May 17, she reiterated her wish in an open letter to a government minister. *AP*



ICEBREAKING WARMING REUTERS
Giant ice shelves float after breaking away from the east coast of the Antarctic Peninsula on March 26, as seen in this image photographed by the European observation satellite ENVISAT. This region has experienced pronounced atmospheric warming since the 1950s, resulting in the breakup.

1,030 dead in India heat wave

HYDERABAD, India—The death toll from a heat wave that has gripped southeastern India rose to 1,030 as reports trickled in from remote rural villages. Most of the dead were older people unable to bear temperatures that reached 50 degrees Celsius.

Officials were still adding up the toll in Andhra Pradesh state on Wednesday, but it was already the highest one-week death count on record for any Indian heat wave.

"There seems to be no end to our suffering," said P. Venkateshwara Rao, a fish farmer in the town of Kaikalur. "We are totally helpless in the face of relentless heat."

The death toll "is much worse than we had anticipated," relief commissioner D.C. Roshaiah said in Hyderabad, the state capital. "We are getting information very slowly from the remote rural areas."

In the hardest-hit districts, mostly on the Bay of Bengal, the heat was so intense that tin-roofed shanties turned into ovens, ponds and rivers dried up, birds fell from the sky and animals collapsed.

All the deaths occurred May 9-15, and the victims were mostly the elderly and the poor, who could not withstand the brutal heat, which causes dehydration and sunstroke. Farm laborers and rickshaw pullers who had worked instead of taking shelter also died.

The deaths were expected to taper off as the second week of the heat wave was not so intense, Roshaiah said. There has not been any more deaths reported during the last two days. *AP*

What is the risk of nuclear war from India-Pakistan tension?

By Mark Trevelyan

LONDON—Faced with crushing defeat by an army twice the size of its own, might Pakistan resort to a nuclear strike against India? Unlikely, say Western defense analysts.

Despite war-like rhetoric and a huge military build-up, the chances of such an escalation—from fierce cross-border exchanges to all-out conventional war and then weapons of mass destruction—still appear small.

Some believe the greatest risk lies in the reliability of the command and control structures thrown together by the two rivals in their haste to build up their nuclear arsenals.

"The major concern is the possibility of nuclear weapons being used through miscommunication or misperception," said Ben Sheppard, defense analyst at Jane's Information Group in London.

"There are questions over the robustness of their structures. How they would stand up in the event of a conflict is highly questionable."

He said Pakistan's control structure was especially weak, creating the theoretical risk that army central command could circumvent the political leadership when it came to a nuclear launch.

As evidence, Sheppard cited reports this month that Pakistan's Army, during a previous border crisis in 1999, had prepared to fit nuclear warheads to missiles without the knowledge of then-prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

In the current stand-off over the disputed region of Kashmir, India and Pakistan have massed up to a million troops, backed by fighter jets, missiles and tanks, along their border.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee told frontline troops on Wednesday that the time had come for a decisive fight. Pakistan vowed to use "full force" if attacked.

Of the two, India is believed to have the greater nuclear capability.

Jane's Strategic Weapon Systems estimates New Delhi has 100 to 150 warheads overall: up to 20 bombs that could be dropped by Jaguar or Mirage 2000 aircraft, and the remainder deliverable by Agni or Prithvi missiles.

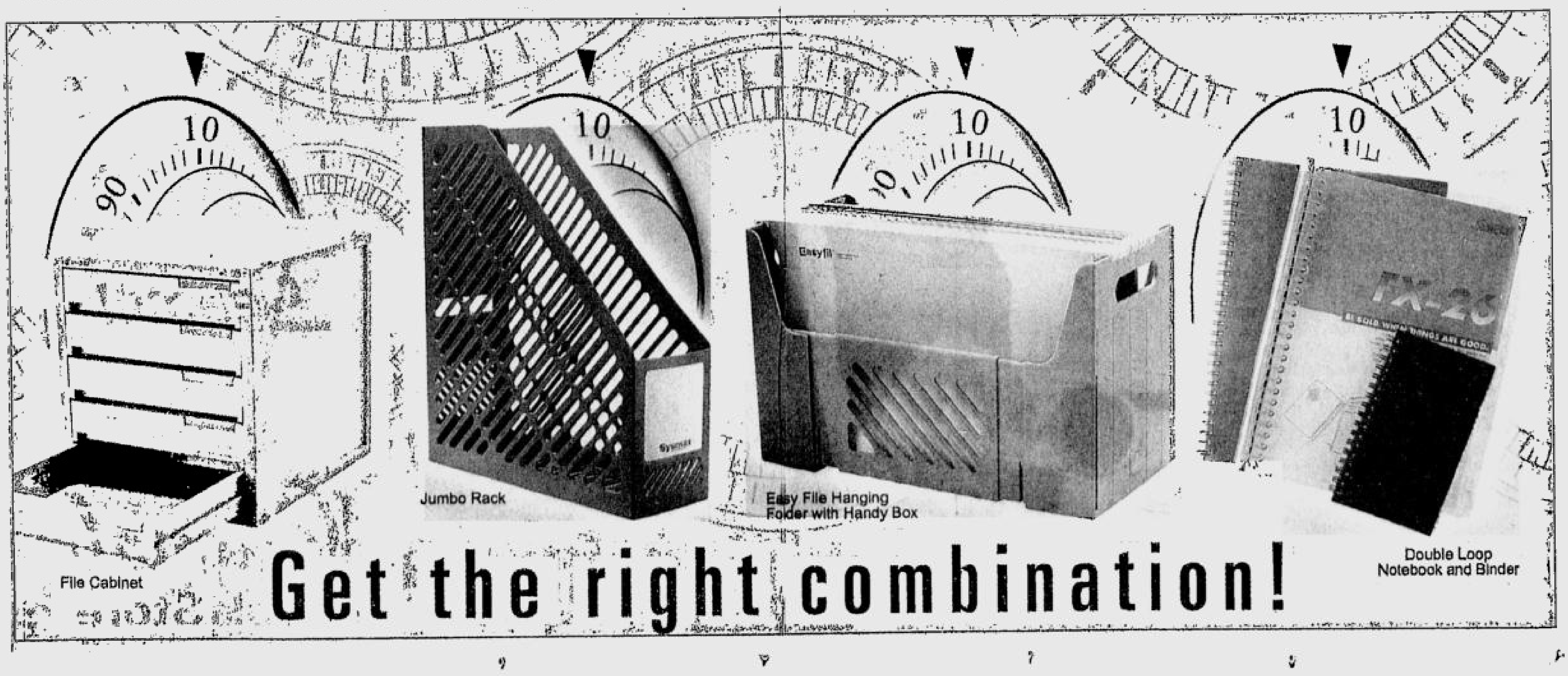
Jane's believes Pakistan has 25 to 50 nuclear warheads—up to 20 bombs for delivery by F16 aircraft, and the rest deployable on Shaheen or Ghauri missiles.

Some analysts say the lack of certain knowledge on either side about the other's nuclear capability is itself a destabilizing factor.

"Everything that adds to uncertainty, adds to the risk of war breaking out by accident," said Sten Widmalm, South Asia specialist at Uppsala University in Sweden.

Analysts agreed Pakistan was the more likely to resort to any first strike because of India's overwhelming conventional superiority.

"Using nuclear weapons would only be a last resort for us," President Pervez Musharraf told a German magazine in April. "Only if there is a threat of Pakistan being wiped off the map, then the pressure from my countrymen to use this option would be too great." *Reuters*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Pope pays tribute to Azerbaijan's 'little flock'

BAKU—Pope John Paul II led a Mass on Thursday to pay tribute to Azerbaijan's tiny Catholic community for surviving the persecution of the Communist regime on the final day of a visit which has highlighted his fragile health.

The Mass was briefly interrupted when an unidentified man on crutches climbed on to the altar and tried to approach the 82-year-old Pontiff, but he was restrained and then led off by security personnel.

The Pope seemed unfazed by the incident. He blessed the man, reported to be a 40-year-old refugee from Azerbaijan's war with Armenia in the early 1990s, by making the sign of the cross in his direction.

The Pope, who is battling Parkinson's disease and arthritis, had to be lowered from his aircraft by a hydraulic lift when he arrived in the mainly Muslim republic of Azerbaijan on Wednesday, the first time this had been done on a foreign trip.

But his health appeared no worse than normal as he led the Mass in the Volleyball Palace in Azerbaijan's capital. His left hand trembled and his words were indistinct, legacies of illnesses that have already been affecting him for some time.

In his sermon, the Pope praised the country's 150-strong Catholic community, one of the smallest in the world, who had kept their faith during the years when the country was part of the Soviet Union.

The Mass was heard by some 4,000 people, with the Catholic congregation bolstered by pilgrims, officials, diplomats and local people.

Before the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, Azerbaijan had a strong Catholic community. But today there are barely 70 local Catholics—the rest of the parishioners are expatriate workers—who hold Mass in a makeshift church.

"The universal Church pays tribute to all those who succeeded in remaining faithful to their baptismal commitments," the Pope said.

"I am thinking in particular of those who lived permanently in this country and who experienced the tragedy of Marxist persecution and bore the consequences of their faithful attachment to Christ."

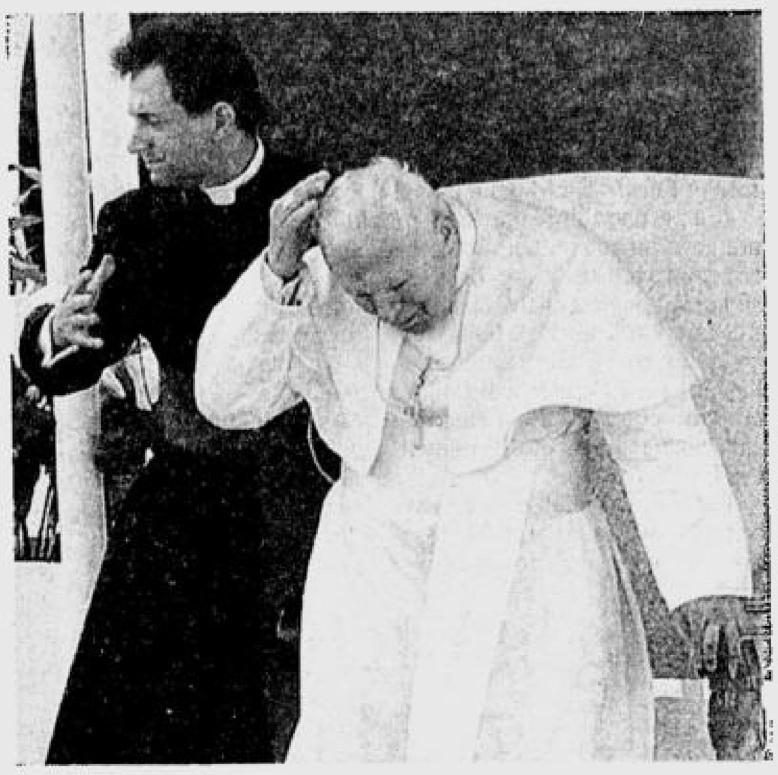
"Today the Pope is with you. He too knows of your suffering and has carried you in his heart during the years of wandering in the desert of persecution . . . Today the eyes of all are turned to you, the little flock."

The Pontiff blessed a foundation stone for a new Roman Catholic parish church in Baku, to replace the one blown up by the Communist authorities in 1937 as they enforced their regime's atheist ideology.

He has offered an undisclosed sum to help with construction of the church, to be built on land provided free by Azeri President Heidar Aliyev.

For the second time in two days, the Pontiff also paid tribute to the Russian Orthodox Church for holding out against Communism.

A row with the Moscow patriarchate over alleged Catholic proselytizing in the former Soviet Union has soured relations and the Pope is keen to resolve it so he can fulfill his long-standing ambition to visit Russia. *AFP*



POPE John Paul II puts his hand to his head in a belated attempt to hold on to his skull cap after it was blown away by a gust of wind upon his arrival in Baku, Azerbaijan, May 22. REUTERS

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Youth voters face disenfranchisement

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Many qualified youth voters will be disenfranchised in the July elections unless Congress amends the law governing the synchronized barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections, a top official of the Commission on Elections in Western Visayas said.

Lawyer Victor Gaborne, acting regional election director, said youth voters who will turn 18 years old on or before the July 15 elections cannot vote in either the SK or barangay elections.

Gaborne said this was the result of Republic Act No. 9164, which was signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo on March 19, that moved the scheduled elections for SK and barangay council from May 6 and 15, respectively, to a synchronized election on July 15.

The law also amended the age qualification for voters in the SK from 15-21 years old to 15-17 year old. Voters who are 18 years old and above are excluded from the SK elections but will vote in the barangay elections.

Gaborne pointed out that because of RA 9164, voters who registered during the special registration on Dec. 10-26, 2001 and who will turn 18 years old on or before the July 15 elections have been excluded from the list of voters for the SK.

They also cannot vote for the barangay elections because RA 8189 or The Voter's Registration Act of 1996 prohibits the registration of voters after Dec. 26, 2001.

While he could not give exact figures, Gaborne said the number of disenfranchised voters runs into "thousands."

The Comelec regional office here has been receiving an increasing number of complaints by affected voters who cannot vote both in the SK and barangay elections.

"It is unfortunate that these youth voters will not be able to exercise their constitutional right of suffrage," said Gaborne, adding that 18-year-old voters are considered among the most active in participating in elections.

He said the disenfranchisement is not the fault of the affected voters but of lawmakers who "overlooked" this when they passed RA 9164.

Rosario Mediatrix Fernandez-Tupas, chair of theprovincial SK federation, said the national federation of the youth body was finalizing plans to address the problem. "It is like (the) government stripping the right of the youth to vote," she said.

The Comelec official urged Congress to pass an amendment to the law stating that those who will be 18 years old and above on July 15 will be considered registered voters in the barangay elections.

Gaborne made the appeal to Congress as initial reports reaching the Comelec regional office showed a low turnout in the two-day special registration for SK voters that ended Tuesday.

Data from the Comelec showed that as of 5 p.m. of Monday, the number of new registered voters reached only 18,941. Negros Occidental had the highest turnout with 10,158 registrants, followed by Capiz (3,721), Antique (1,737), Aklan (1,643), Iloilo (1,491) and Guimaras (191). ***With a report from Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau***

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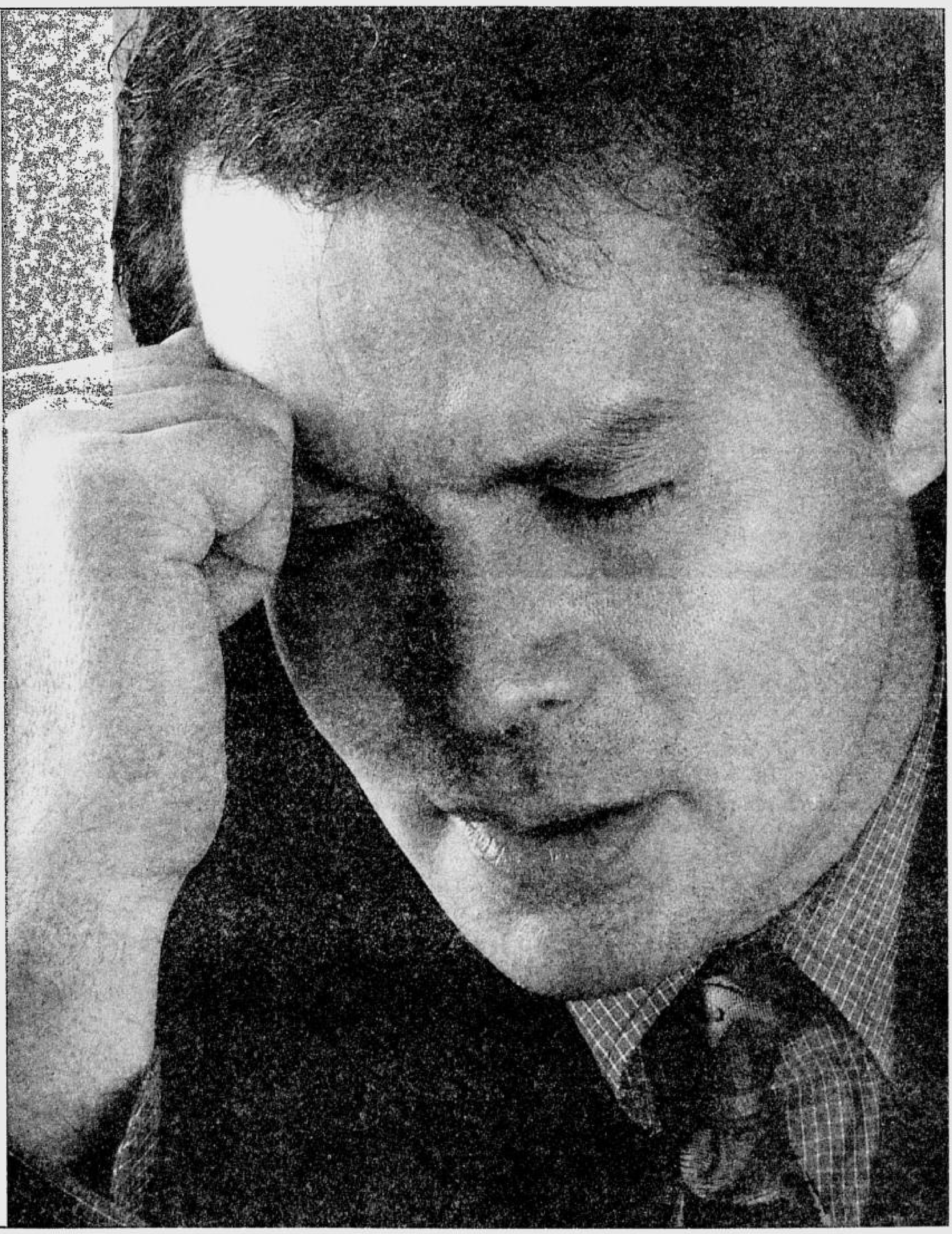

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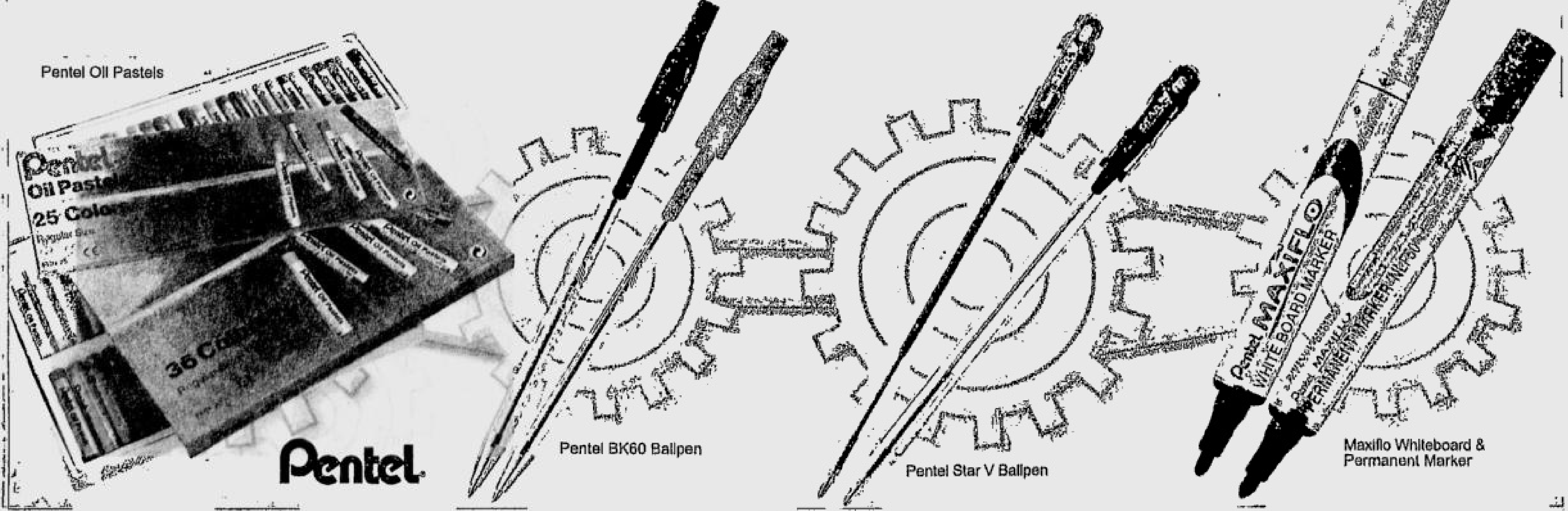
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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming more frequent over the Western sections of Luzon and Visayas.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	HI32° Lo 24°
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	HI 24° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 35° Lo 22°
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	HI 33° Lo 25°
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	HI 30° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 26°
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 24°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	HI 33° Lo 25°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	HI 33° Lo 26°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	HI 33° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	HI 32° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research
05/24/02

W. Visayas execs seek enforcement of peace pact with former NPA rebels

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Regional Peace and Order Council (RPOC) is urging the national government to hasten the implementation of the peace agreement with the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB).

Chief Supt. Rolando Garcia, Western Visayas police director and RPOC vice chair, said the move was a result of last week's meeting of top RPA-ABB leaders with officials of the Philippine National Police, Armed Forces of the Philippines and members of the League of Municipal Mayors of the Philippines (LMP) in Iloilo.

The meeting, called to clarify the status of the peace talks and establish close coordination between the rebels and local executives, was attended by Arturo Tabara, national chair of the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa, a political arm of the RPA-ABB, and Stephen Paduano, also known as Carapali Lualhati, RPA-ABB national commander.

Garcia said the meeting was a welcome development in the 17-month peace agreement. "We want to preserve the cessation of hostilities between the RPA-ABB and government troops," Garcia told the INQUIRER.

He also welcomed the willingness of mayors to be directly involved in the peace process.

The RPA-ABB broke off from the mainstream Communist Party of the Philippine-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF) over ideological differences shortly after 1992 when the CPP launched a "rectification movement' to correct major political errors.

On Dec. 26, 2000, the RPA-ABB entered into a peace agreement with the government. The agreement, however, came under fire from nongovernment and religious groups, especially in Negros Occidental, that consider it disadvantageous to the people, particularly the provision allowing the rebels to carry firearms.

The RPA-ABB was also criticized by leaders identified with the mainstream leftist movement who accused them of extortion, robbery, intimidation, indiscriminate firing of weapons and usurpation of police functions.

Garcia said the RPOC resolution would focus on the implementation of key provisions in the peace agreement like the release of "development funds" worth P500 million to fund socio-economic projects in areas identified by the RPA-ABB. Another provision to be implemented is the release of another P10 million as "reintegration fund" for political prisoners released under the terms of the peace agreement.

The other issues that need immediate action, said Garcia, are the provisions allowing 100 RPA-ABB members nationwide to carry firearms and the release of around 200 alleged political prisoners.

Both sides also urged the national government to form and activate the Joint Enforcement and Monitoring Committee that will ensure the smooth enforcement of the agreement.

In the meeting, Garcia said the RPA-ABB has agreed not to apprehend criminal suspects and instead coordinate with the police and the AFP and to inform local police chiefs and mayors of their presence in a particular area to avoid "irritants and flash points."

There's Life After Debt

The Asian Financial Crisis of 1997 gave a big blow to the Philippine economy. Many were caught flat-footed and unarmed against the turmoil. Business statistics showed that thousands of companies have closed down and a lot more left in comatose status.

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According to **Atty. Voltaire C. Dela Cruz, CSI Director for Legal,** the peso deterioration that resulted in the staggering increase in the price of materials, particularly imported ones have adversely affected the capitalists. Some were forced to slow down production, reduced manpower and increase the price of commodities. These compelling factors caused the consumers' purchasing power to enormously decrease. This domino effect led to economic slump which crippled many businessmen.

Due to this crisis, businessmen failed to settle their obligations with their creditors/financiers. Interest loans piled up until they could no longer sustain operation of their businesses. And to make things worst, they were chased, harassed and even sued by their creditors.

"We know the ordeal of companies and people who are indebted - heavily burdened, pressured, scared and feeling like it's their end", according to **Mr. Teddy Esguerra, Marketing Manager.**

"That is why we, at **CSI,** committed ourselves to help our clients in giving them security and peace of mind; **we provide an emergency room for financially distressed** clients for an intensive discussion, planning and immediate implementation of solutions to their problems", Mr. Esguerra quipped.

It's main objective is to act as a barrier and later on as a "bullet proof vest" to individuals and companies from harassment, threats and litigation imposed by creditors.

we provide an emergency room for financially distressed clients for an intensive discussion, planning and immediate implementation of solutions to their problems

CSI acts as a bridge between the debtors and the creditors for a win-win situation. However, the task of **CSI** does not end there. They help their clients recover through partnerships with other clients to form alliances. They even source investors who could revive their businesses. They have tie-ups with different local and foreign companies to assist their clients with finances in their rehabilitation programs.

CSI caters to businesses, big or small, who need solutions to their debt problems; who want to live a normal life again.

"Let's face it, our economy is not that strong yet and apparently there's a lot of people undergoing the same predicament", according to Mr. Esguerra. "As we can see, there are those who have closed their shops already, there are unfinished building constructions, and other indicators that the country has not recovered yet, and we would like to help", he added.

To date, **CSI** has a considerable number of clients whose businesses have already been rehabilitated. Some through loan restructuring, others by getting finances which could be **acquired within 48 hours** to support their operation and likewise merging or tie-ups with other investors. Whatever, now, they're back to business!

"If there's one thing that we could be proud of, is that **CSI** doesn't only help businessmen and individuals, but in our own way we are somehow contributing to the country's economic growth", boasted Atty. Dela Cruz.

Determination, focus, right decisions and rehabilitation is what **CSI** all about. They are geared towards reassuring their clients of total commitment to provide them with solutions to their most complex problems.

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Floods, excessive use of fertilizers make Pangasinan farms acidic

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—The province's farming areas are turning acidic because of floods and excessive use of chemical fertilizers by farmers, a Department of Agriculture official here said.

Jose Almendares, provincial agriculture officer, said 35,000 of 170,000 hectares of rice land in low-lying areas of eastern Pangasinan have become acidic.

"This results in low production of the crop. Only 60 bags at 50 kilos each are harvested per hectare, below the regular 80 bags harvested by farmers," he said.

Because of the rice culture in irrigated lands, the soil is always burdened with chemical fertilizers, which make the soil acidic, he said.

Frequent floods also contribute to the acidity because the floodwaters wash away the zinc content of the soil, Almendares said.

The provincial government is encouraging the use of organic fertilizers to neutralize the soil's acidity, but only few farmers are using them, he said.

"There is a low appreciation level of organic farming because the production of organic fertilizers is labor intensive. If they will buy organic fertilizers, they will spend more because they have to use more of it compared to chemical fertilizers," Almendares said.

The agriculture office recommended the use of both organic and chemical fertilizers for maximum yield and to neutralize the soil's acidity.

For every hectare of land, a farmer must apply five bags of organic fertilizer, three bags of complete fertilizer (nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium) and three bags of urea.

Almendares also said the provincial government has started a campaign for the adoption of hybrid rice technology in Pangasinan.

"We have successfully produced hybrid palay seeds in a demonstration farm in Mapandan, and we are training more farmers in hybrid palay production," he said.

Gov. Victor Agbayani said the program is a big push toward increasing the farmers' harvests and incomes.

"We project a harvest of 90 to 120 cavans for farmers who will be covered by the program," he said.

Almendares said both organic and inorganic fertilizers would be used in hybrid rice production. ***Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

Power inventions offered to Napocor

BAGUIO CITY—Alternative power proposals have been presented to the financially strapped National Power Corp. (Napocor), even as the state firm prepares for a congressional inquiry into the purchased power adjustment (PPA) controversy and Tuesday's Luzon blackout.

Inventors from Baguio, Metro Manila and Mindanao have presented proposals, mostly untested inventions, that profess to "alter and advance the power economy of the Philippines," a Napocor source said.

Their inventions range from an perpetual-motion power generator to a reconfigured turbine designed to make full use of hydroelectric power.

One of the proposals was introduced to secure government endorsement for the invention's marketing venture abroad, a Marikina-based inventor told the INQUIRER.

Others are being offered to the government "out of a sense of patriotism," the source said.

"The inventions have drawn the interest of Napocor, which is seeking cost-effective systems to upgrade its power facilities," the source said.

The cash-strapped state firm is scheduled for privatization, which is a prerequisite of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act for the power industry's deregulation.

Napocor's assets worth P900 million, including aging power facilities, will be auctioned off in the next 10 years. Napocor is expected to recondition several power facilities to attract high bidding offers.

Sid Ursua, the Marikina-based inventor, called the INQUIRER Northern Luzon Bureau on Tuesday to discuss an invention that will control waste from traditional hydroelectric facilities.

Ursua said he had discussed his "ultra-low pressure head" for hydroelectric plant turbines with former Napocor president, Jesus Alcordo, to obtain Napocor's endorsement for the invention's testing in a London laboratory.

His invention is actually a turbine design scaled down to 1.5 meters (4.5 feet) high.

"This is necessary because present hydroelectric plants only generate a third of their real capacities. Once the water (driving the turbines) drops to a level that is lower than the turbine's, the plant stops functioning. My system will allow the plant to continue running," Ursua claimed.

"This is going to revolutionize the country's (energy industry). But we want it done right. We want overseas investors to come in and finance its manufacture here. We don't have the kind of experts who can appreciate it, that is why we want it tested in the (United Kingdom)," he said.

Another invention is an indigenous perpetual-motion system, which is being offered by a joint Filipino-Canadian venture for testing on the 75-megawatt Ambuklao hydroelectric power plant in Benguet.

Its inventor, Roland Labador, said he first offered the system to then President Fidel Ramos at the height of the power crisis in the early 1990s. Labador said he was largely ignored.

Canadian-led Global Equities Markets Group and its subsidiary company, Self-Energizing Power Plant Inc., are offering to test the system on the aging Ambuklao facility, which has not been operating for nearly three years now. ***Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Squabble proves gov't not sincere on peace, says NPA

BAGUIO CITY—The recent squabble of government peace negotiators shows that the government is not serious in pursuing peace talks, according to the Kalinga-based unit of the communist New People's Army.

Ka Tipon, spokesperson of the NPA's Lejo Cawilan Command, said his group was reluctant to join the peace talks because the government's negotiators were not "genuinely interested."

The remarks came after former Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello III, chief government negotiator with the communist-led National Democratic Front, complained that Norberto Gonzales, presidential adviser on special concerns, did not coordinate a peace mission with his panel.

Gonzales has been authorized by President Macapagal-Arroyo to conduct back-channel talks with the NDF.

Bello said he was not dismayed by the incident, but he only clarified the relationship between the panel and Gonzales' team.

The result, according to Bello, was a rejection by the NDF of Gonzales.

The government is also raising so many issues to prolong the suspension of the peace talks, Ka Tipon claimed.

"For example, they (government negotiators) suspended the peace process when (Cagayan Rep. Rodolfo) Aguinaldo was killed. It is very clear that they are protecting a monster, a person with plenty of blood debts. This shows their real character," he said. ***Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Probe sought of Davao water district's perks

DAVAO CITY—The Commission on Audit has ordered a review of the huge perks and benefits of board members of the Davao City Water District (DCWD).

COA regional director Eugenio Fernandez has assigned a four-member team to audit the cash advances, allowances and other expenditures of directors and other personnel of the water utility from January 2001 to March 31, 2002.

The move came following a city council resolution asking it to review the books of accounts of the DCWD.

City council majority floor leader Bonifacio Militar said the Office of the Ombudsman-Mindanao has also acted on the accusation against the DCWD. The Ombudsman was requested to conduct a similar investigation.

Militar said the Ombudsman has asked his office to submit supporting documents on the alleged huge allowances and benefits received by the DCWD directors.

Earlier, the city council chided the board members of the DCWD for their huge perks and benefits, which are disallowed under government rulings.

The legislative body also asked the COA to ask the board members to return excesses in salaries and benefits, which they have received beyond what is prescribed by law.

Militar said the board members were receiving P3,000 per diem per meeting or P12,000 a month, representation allowance of P2,100 per month, emergency miscellaneous allowance at P15,000 per month, uniform allowance of P4,000 per year, and medical and dental allowances of P70,000 per year.

The board is reportedly also receiving P98,000 worth of financial assistance, usually given every December as Christmas bonus, 13th-month pay of P32,000, mid-year bonus of P32,000, a sack of rice per month and unlimited allowances for local and foreign travels.

The five-member board also allegedly enjoys the use of luxury vehicles. A Fuso Mercedes is allegedly permanently assigned to one director, Ernesto Plana.

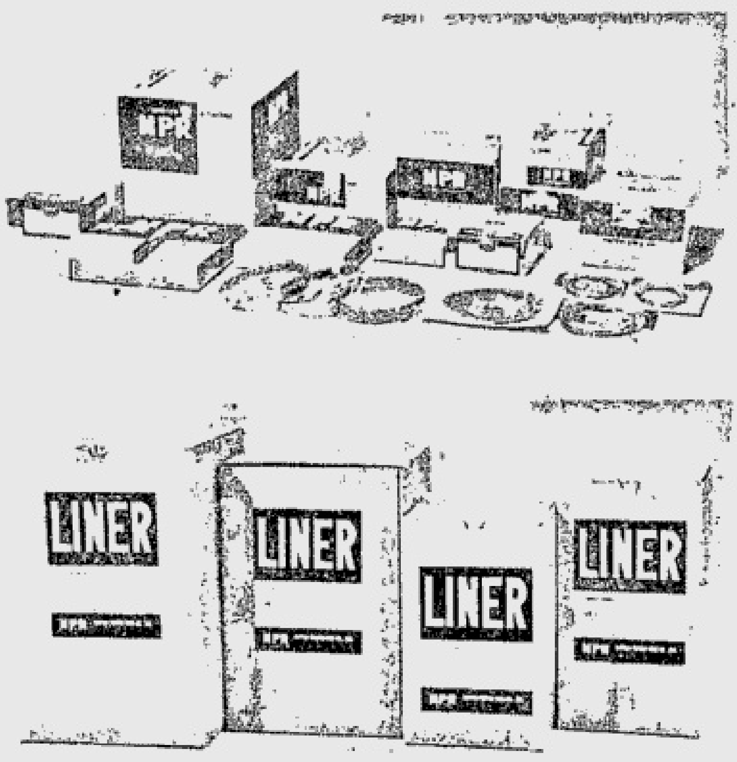
Two Honda Accord cars and an Isuzu Crosswind AUV are at the disposal of any member.

Militar said the board members have been receiving salaries, perks and benefits that are not allowed under Presidential Decree No. 198, or by COA rules and regulations.

Citing a Supreme Court decision dated Jan. 23, 2002, Militar said the high court has categorically and conclusively declared that board of directors of the water district can not receive more than what is prescribed under PD 198 as amended by PD 768 and PD 1479.

Therefore, Militar said, each member of the DCWD board is entitled only to the LUWA-approved honorarium of P3,000 per meeting.

In a letter to DCWD acting general manger Alfonso Laid, COA state auditor Gloria Ladja informed the district management of several COA disallowances of the P1,400 monthly Rata per board director, monthly extraordinary miscellaneous expenses of P8,000, 13th-month pay of P30,700, medical expenses, uniform allowance of P2,500, rice allowances and productivity financial assistance of P137,100. ***Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***



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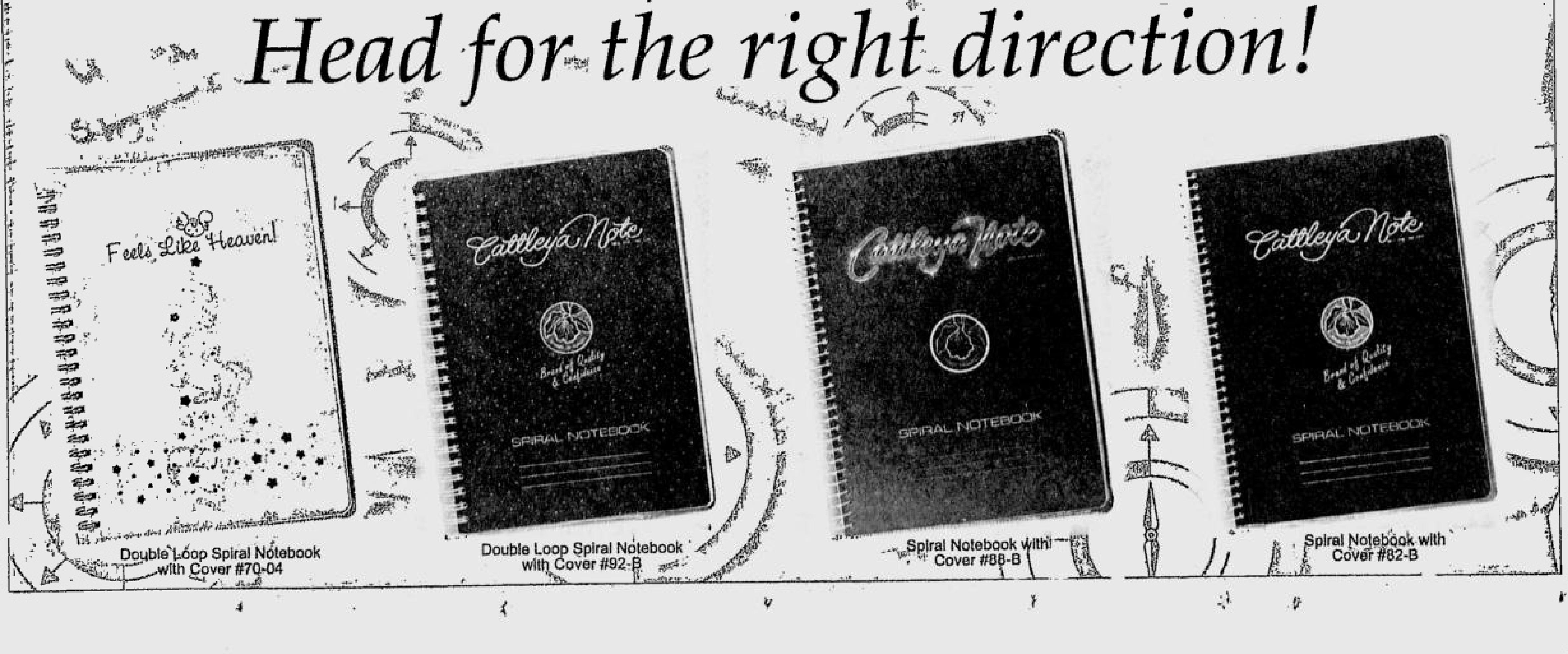

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MEDICINE DISTRIBUTION

42 mayors face COA investigation

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The provincial office of the Commission on Audit has asked town mayors in Iloilo to explain how they distributed close to P15 million worth of medicines intended for a disaster- preparedness project of Sen. Vicente Sotto last year.

The COA's letter, sent to 42 mayors in the towns and a component city of the province on Feb. 13, sought an explanation on how the medicines were distributed.

Each mayor supposedly received P257,518.45 worth of medicines for the "Rescue and Emergency Disaster Program" initiated by Sotto.

The money came from the Center for Health and Development for Western Visayas of the Department of Health. The center signed a memorandum of agreement with the municipality of Janiuay, 23 kilometers from here, through its mayor, Frankie Locsin, to buy medicines and equipment worth P15 million for "emergency purposes."

Janiuay distributed the medicines to other local government units in Iloilo. The medicines included boxes and bottles of antibiotics, anti-tuberculosis drugs, paracetamols and vitamins.

The investigation of the use of close to P15 million worth of medicines came after they were made subject of "suspension and disallowance" notices from the COA due to some "discrepancies" over how Janiuay bought the medicines.

Under COA rules, transactions are suspended when there are doubts on their legality, propriety or if there is lack of documents and other requirements. The suspension is lifted after a satisfactory explanation or submission of documents.

Transactions are disallowed when they are irregular, unnecessary and excessive, among other reasons.

Disallowances are settled when accountable persons provide justification and documents or pay the amount disallowed.

But some mayors, who received the medicines from January to March last year, said they have not been clearly told how the medicines were to be reflected in their books of account, as well as how to distribute and use them. They simply gave them away when the campaign for the May 2001 elections was ongoing.

Sta. Barbara Mayor Isabelo Maquino, through his lawyer, said he received the medicines in August 2001, but there was no instruction on what they were intended for.

Nonilon Esteva, the provincial auditor, said he had twice sent letters to mayors, but not one has submitted their "utilization report."

Several mayors, however, said they have not received medicines from Locsin.

The 2001 audit report of Janiuay noted that the call for bids was made on Jan. 4, 2001. On Jan. 15, at 9:35 a.m., three bidders were listed—AM Europharma Corp., Mallix Drug Center and Philpharma Wealth Corp., all Manila-based drug companies.

The opening of the bids took place without the presence of the provincial auditor or his representative.

AM Europharma and Mallix Drug Center won the bids for P13.1 million and P1.7 million, respectively. The following day, Jan. 16, the medicines were delivered to and received by Mayor Locsin, and they were inspected by Gabriel Billena, the supply officer.

The COA's post audit inspection of the bidding documents revealed several "discrepancies," however. It noted that the president and general manager of AM Europharma Corp. is Rod D. Villanueva. M.D, while Mallix is owned by Rodrigo D. Villanueva.

Mallix listed its address as AM Europharma Building, Rm. 201 Kilometer 16, West Service Road, South Superhighway, Parañaque, Metro Manila. AM Europharma and Mallix have the same telefax number.

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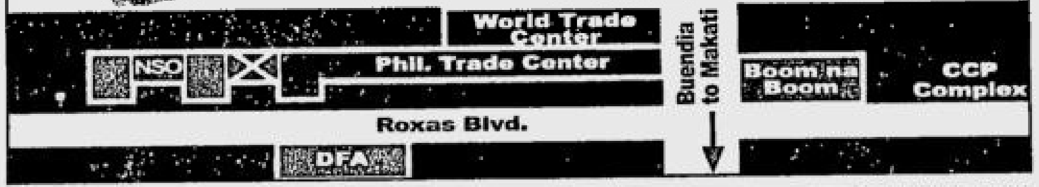

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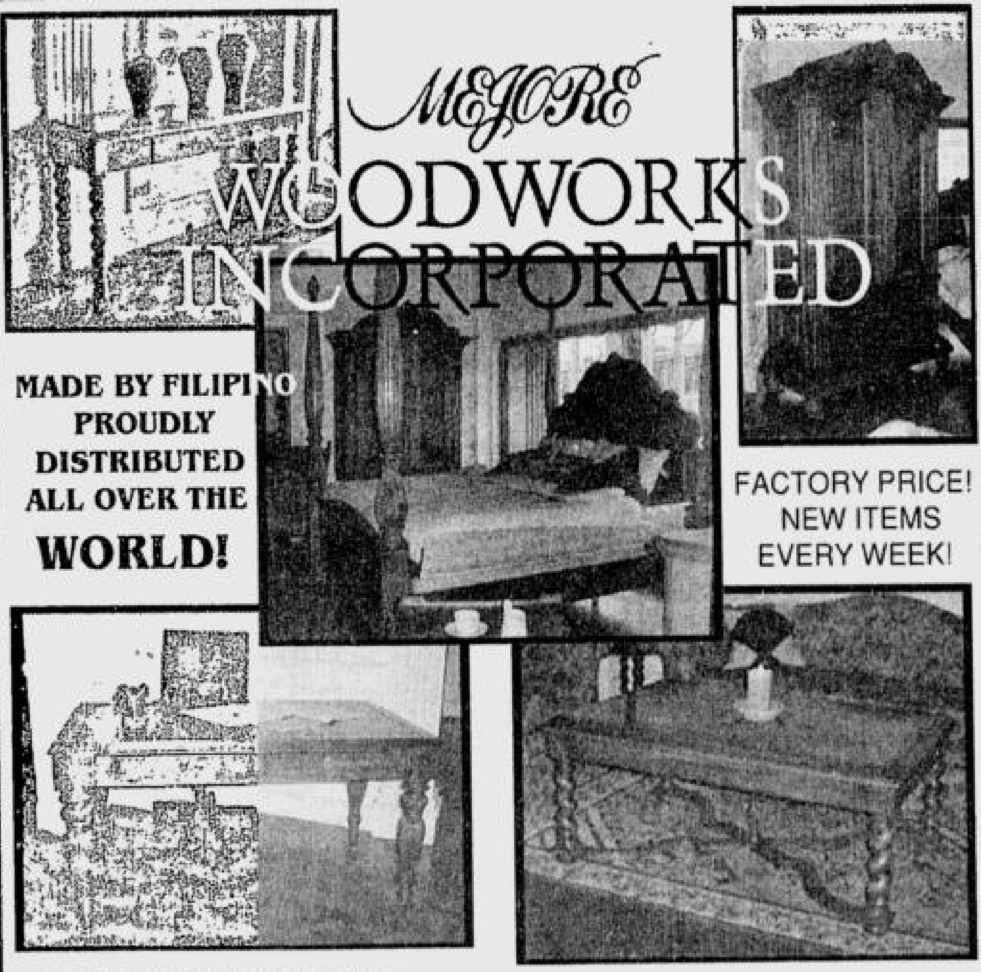

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Why would gov't let MILF disburse funds?

From page A1

2001, the parties are hereby committed as follows:

1. The MILF, in order to determine, lead and manage rehabilitation and development projects in the areas affected by the conflict, will establish a project implementing body which will have the power and function to receive and disburse private and GRP funds. And in case of GRP funds, it will observe pertinent government rules and procedures pursuant to the provision of Paragraph B-2 of the GRP-MILF Tripoli Agreement on Peace of June 22, 2001.

2. The GRP and concerned government agencies in coordination with the MILF will continue to undertake the rehabilitation and development efforts in the conflict-affected areas. Consistent with GRP's resolve to task the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) as its primary implementing agency for development, the ARMM shall enter into contractual relations within its charter pertaining to rehabilitation and development with the MILF project implementing body. Likewise with other government development agencies outside ARMM areas.

3. The parties shall safely return evacuees to their places of origin ad provide all necessary financial/material and technical assistance to those evacuees for them to start a new life. The GRP shall award reparations for the properties lost or destroyed by reasons of the conflict upon reasonable proof thereon as mutually verified and acknowledged by both parties.

4. The parties shall maintain an inventory or record of all relief and rehabilitation assistance or projects actually extended by the GRP and other private entities to the evacuees in the conflict-affected areas.

5. The MILF will submit to the GRP the name, structure and personnel of its project implementing body assigned to determine, lead and manage rehabilitation and development projects in the areas affected by the conflict as provided in the GRP-MILF Tripoli Agreement on Peace dated June 22 2001."

The agreement further stipulates the activation of a monitoring team which will include representatives of the Organization of Islamic Conference. Article VII mandates that this team of monitors will receive administrative support, including "office space, equipment, vehicles, supplies and other administrative and support requirements."

Serious irregularities

The document looks well-intentioned and may indeed contribute to confidence-building, except that there are very serious irregularities.

Up to this day, the MILF has not signed a formal peace agreement with the government—thus in every respect it remains a rebel group. The question is: Why would government turn over public funds to a rebel group? What assurance is there that the funds would indeed go to the projects identified?

The story of how government funds intended to construct an irrigation canal ended up establishing rebel bunkers is still fresh in people's minds. The recent discovery by the new administrator of the Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA) that government funds were used by the Moro National Liberation Front to buy firearms is another reason for concern. Above all: What if after hundreds of millions had been turned over to the MILF or its implementing body, rebel leaders decided they were not happy with the arrangement and pulled out of the deal?

The use of the word "reparation" in referring to the government's responsibility to rehabilitate the victims of war is a giveaway and an indication that the document was prepared by the MILF rather than a product of discussions between the GRP and the MILF panels. What government in its right mind would agree to the use in a formal document of a word that would mean admission that it had wronged a group of people and must thus bear the pain of undertaking reparations?

Many other questions remain in the air. Who would be the beneficiaries of the reparations? Would they include the Muslim, Christian or tribal civilians who lost their loved ones, carabaos, houses, the season's harvest and other things precious to them? Or does this mean repairing the MILF's structures, its headquarters and war facilities in the former rebel camps? Would this include payment of damages suffered by business establishments: the burned ferry in Ozamiz City in 1999, the buses bombed and burned by MILF rebels?

The reparations provision could open the floodgates to all sorts of claims that the government cannot possibly afford.

Winning hearts

The implementing guidelines would also undermine the existing governmental setup. Duly constituted local government units and their leaders will merely stand on the sidelines, while a rebel group, by undertaking the implementation of relief and rehabilitation projects, will succeed in winning the hearts of the people by using government facilities and funds.

The biggest anomaly of all marking the May 6 joint communiqué and the May 7 implementing guidelines is the fact that the terms and conditions were negotiated and signed by a political personality operating outside of the duly constituted government peace panel.

When the all-Mindanao peace panel was formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo, panel chair Jesus Dureza held a series of consultations with the stakeholders in the conflict-affected areas. The effort was so extensive that even military officers who were supposed to "just obey orders" were given an opportunity to air their sentiments in the consultations.

The most remarkable achievement of the Dureza panel was its effort to include representatives of the indigenous cultural communities in the technical working group after the attempt to include them in the peace panel failed. This had never been done before; indigenous people who were greatly affected by the MILF's depredations had never been given an opportunity to participate in the effort to chart Mindanao's future.

The sidelining of the panel's output in favor of the Gonzales-initiated "back-channel" talks has caused despair and disappointment to those who participated in the process. What actually incensed many Mindanao leaders is the fact that the panel's efforts—which were actually reflective of the dreams and aspirations of the stakeholders in the island—were disregarded in favor of the initiatives of Gonzales, who hails from Luzon and represents imperial Manila.

Magsaysay's example

Today's generation may have faint memories of President Ramon Magsaysay, but to many older people in the town of Alamada in the province of Cotabato, his name is inscribed in their hearts for sentimental reasons.

Many of them are former members of the Hukbalahap, a guerrilla organization during the Japanese occupation that metamorphosed into a communist revolutionary movement after World War II. They later responded to Magsaysay's call to return to the fold of the law.

They were brought to Alamada, then known as Edcor, a settlement located at the foot of the mountain ranges that separate Cotabato province from Maguindanao, very near the MILF's main camp, Abubakar Al Siddique.

Without their guns, they have led new lives and are now successful farmers and businessmen.

It was a simple but very practical solution. To end a rebellion, take away the guns and give the rebels an opportunity to lead new lives.

We must take the Magsaysay doctrine of reconciliation, and the lessons from the peace agreement with the MNLF, to heart. For the MILF to show sincerity in contributing to the effort of bringing about stability in the region, they must be willing to part with their guns in exchange for tractors and other farm implements. The government must assume the role of a strong negotiator and take up the issue of disarmament as one of the most important concerns in the continuing peace talks.

(The author is on his second term as governor of Cotabato Province; he heads the Mindanao Confederation of Governors, City Mayors and League of Municipal Mayors Presidents.)

'Dangerous' terms in accords rejected

From page A1

ous provisions."

"It is very dangerous when you cloak rebels with police powers," Pichay said.

. Pichay said Gonzales, the presidential adviser for special concerns, failed to answer his question on the provision granting MILF police powers in "MILF areas/communities" in Wednesday's four-hour hearing.

Pichay said that while he would not like to preempt the committee's recommendation, he feels that "there's a lot of ambiguity that should be clarified" in the agreements.

In Lucena City, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu said the MILF cannot enjoy police powers. "Definitely, we will never agree to that because there is only one armed forces and there is only one police force," Cimatu said.

He described the controversial provision as not "properly settled." "This will be properly clarified in the implementing directive that is being worked out," he said, adding that the country's soldiers should not be ordered to first secure the permission and coordinate with the MILF.

In Cotabato City, Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza said he had not been replaced as chief of the government team negotiating peace with the MILF.

"I have not received any walking papers, so I assume that I am still the chairman," Dureza told reporters at the Estosan Garden Hotel on Tuesday.

"There was a meeting in Malacañang (on Monday) and it (the controversy) has been clarified. So the matter about Secretary Bert Gonzales signing an agreement in KL (Kuala Lumpur) had been clarified," Dureza said.

Renegotiate terms

Lobregat urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to order the government peace panel to renegotiate the terms Gonzales signed. "She can order her negotiators to renegotiate the agreements right away," he said.

He scoffed at Gonzales' statement that the agreements he signed were confidence-building measures meant to draw the MILF to sign a final peace agreement.

"He built the confidence of the MILF (all right,) but what about the confidence of the military, the 20 million Mindanaoans and the 70 million Filipinos?" Lobregat asked.

He maintained that the agreements allowed the return of the MILF camps, gave the rebels a status of belligerency, awarded them reparation, and gave them wide-ranging powers including police powers and full authority to use and manage public and private funds. He said the agreements were outside the bounds of the Constitution and practically "gave away everything" to the MILF.

Lobregat said that contrary to Gonzales' claim, the documents that the backdoor negotiator signed were actual implementing guidelines for the mother "agreement on peace" signed on June 22, 2001 in Tripoli, Libya, by chief government negotiator Jesus Dureza and Al-haj Murad for the MILF.

"He is saying that these are interim agreements but these would be implemented," Lobregat said. "If you compare these with the 1976 peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (also signed in Tripoli), all subsequent agreements were implemented."

Lobregat said the agreements affected the morale of the AFP, citing the testimonies on Wednesday by Cimatu and Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes.

No way

In Lucena, where he presided at the change of command ceremony for the new chief of the AFP Southern Luzon Command, Cimatu was emphatic about the issue of returning the MILF camps. "I would like to tell them: no way the MILF shall get back their camps."

But he added that the AFP would abide by the provisions in the agreement that would address rehabilitation and reconstruction, adding that "the soldier will agree to anything that will lead to honorable peace for Mindanao and for our country."

He noted, however, that under the agreement, the MILF camps would be retained. "We have nothing to worry about."

"They talked about the rehabilitation and reconstruction for displaced families. But we have been doing these ever since we captured the first MILF camp."

In Cotabato City, Dureza clarified news reports that Gonzales had no authority to sign the agreements. "He has the mandate," Dureza said.

Earlier, former Maguindanao Representative and now MILF technical adviser Michael Mastura said they could not continue dealing with Dureza because the chief government negotiator claimed to have limited powers.

Mastura said Dureza had told the MILF panel, prior to the signing of the agreements, that "he is not authorized to commit."

"That's why our talks had to be suspended (because) we cannot continue dealing with someone who is not authorized to commit," Mastura said.

Political issue

Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, the new Southern Command chief in Mindanao, admitted that it was really hard for the government to run after criminals who have sought refuge inside MILF "territory."

But it would be different from hereon, he said, because the rebel group had signed the agreements.

Carolina, the former Southern Luzon Command chief, was replaced by Maj. Gen. Roy Kyamko, former head of the 6th Infantry Division based in Sinsuat, Maguindanao.

Asked if government soldiers pursuing a member of the MILF should first secure the MILF's permission, Carolina replied: "You know, all of these can happen with or without that document. But with that document, there can be a chance for peace."

The new Southcom chief stressed that "the military would not be part of the process of threshing out the political issues concerning the agreements."

"That is not our job. Our job is to wait for the political leaders, those who are clothed with authority to address the political issues. And once the issues are threshed out, we will implement the result," he said.

Carolina belittled the brouhaha over the interim agreements.

"We have been through these many, many times. We all grew up in the Philippines. Here, any little thing that you do, there would be people who would surely agree and disagree. That's the price of living in a democracy," the Southcom chief said in his light remark on the issue.

"But in the end, we'll implement whatever is to be implemented," he added. ***With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Will the real Alghazie . . .

From page A1

on Wednesday Ustadz Noor Mohammad Umog, 34, allegedly the real Alghazie, who claimed responsibility for the series of bombings here last month that left at least 75 people dead and injured.

Alghazie, in interviews over radio stations, had said he was the chief of the special operations group of the Abu Sayyaf, a band of bandits holding hostage an American couple in Basilan.

Military and police officials had issued conflicting reports on the arrest of Alghazie a few weeks ago. The military said it had captured Alghazie, but the police said that Alghazie had escaped a dragnet.

It turned out that the military was referring to Jay-ar Jikiron, who was arrested along with another Abu Sayyaf commander, while the police was talking about Abdulatip Adsoy Paglala who had eluded arrest.

"We think he's the real Alghazie. This is the end of the line," Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police, said of Umog.

Not important

But Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta, military spokesperson, said it was not important whether Umog was the real Alghazie.

"Alghazie is just a code name. What's important is that the leader of those who carried out bombing attacks and extortion activities in General Santos City has been arrested," Mabanta said.

Umog was arrested while driving a "trisikad (pedal-pushed sidecar)" on Almonte Street in Cotabato City, said Col. Agustin Dema-ala, deputy commander of the Army's 601st Brigade.

Dema-ala, chief of Task Force Gensan, said Umog was the leader of the Alharakatul Al-Islamiya or Abu Sayyaf Group in Central Mindanao with a P1-million bounty for his capture, dead or alive.

Alghazie had also claimed responsibility for extorting millions in protection money from businessmen and for burning two big shopping malls.

To confuse authorities, Umog used the name Abu Muslim, which means "warrior," and Alghazie, the first name of one of his sons, according to Dema-ala.

Dema-ala said Umog managed to elude arrest during the raid on his safehouse two days after Ahmad Saluan alias Jikiron and his four companions were nabbed by the military in General Santos on May 7.

Police had earlier arrested suspects in the bombing of Fitmart Shopping Center on April 21, which killed 15 people and injured more than 60 others.

Policemen and members of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency arrested on April 24 Abubakar Amilhasa, Arsul Ginta and Jejhon Macalinsal in Barangay Calumpang in General Santos.

Three days earlier, police arrested Bobby Sabilo and Maliquin Ampi, alleged members of the Moro National Liberation Front. Benjie Puntuan, a bomb expert and alleged leader of a 10-member terrorist cell in General Santos eluded arrest.

Dema-ala said Umog was the mastermind in the bombing of Fitmart.

Dema-ala said Umog, a Tausog, was recruited in 1993 by no less than ASG founder Abdurajak Janjalani in Isabela, Basilan.

Teacher

Umog was born on June 11, 1968 in Kabanbata, Isabela. A graduate of education from Claret College of Isabela, he served as public school teacher of Begang National High School in Lamitan, Basilan.

Umog has 50 pending arrest warrants in connection with the kidnapping and serious illegal detention charges filed against him before various local courts in Basilan and Jolo.

"He is involved in many kidnappings for ransom, including that of the Burnhams," said Col. Noel Detoyato, referring to American missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham who have been held by the Abu Sayyaf for almost a year.

Umog had fled from Basilan where the Abu Sayyaf bandits are holding the Burnhams and a Filipina nurse while on the run from joint US-Philippine military operations to root them out.

Detoyato said Umog slipped out of Basilan and traveled to several cities in Mindanao before he was arrested in Cotabato. ***With a report from AFP***

'No return of MILF camps, no sellout'

From page A1

signed on May 6 in Cyberjaya.

There are no skeletons in that "closet." The communiqué simply states that both parties agree to isolate and interdict (a very ecclesiastical term) all criminal syndicates and kidnap-for-ransom group, including so-called "lost commands" operating in Mindanao.

The isolation and interdiction include, among others, the identification of criminal elements and the formation of an ad hoc joint action group in order to pursue and apprehend these criminal elements in coordination with their respective coordinating committees on the cessation of hostilities.

I don't see any "sellout" or "return of the camps" or "grant of belligerency status" in the communiqué unless I'm awfully lacking in creative imagination. What I do see is at least a commitment in principle to put an end to the lawlessness in Mindanao that continues to impede the progress of the peace process there.

Guidelines

The other document that is at the center of controversy and misunderstanding is titled "Implementing Guidelines on the Humanitarian, Rehabilitation and Development Aspects of the GRP-MILF Tripoli Agreement on Peace of 2001," and signed on May 7 at Putrajaya.

Here, we need not resort to imagination. *Res ipsa loquitur* (The thing speaks for itself).

The document is án agreement on respect for human rights, observance of international humanitarian laws and rehabilitation and development aspects in accordance with the previously agreed Terms of Reference—that is, the two parties' Kuala Lumpur Agreement of March 24, 2001, on the resumption of peace talks and the Tripoli Agreement on peace of June 22, 2001. The definition of terms as specified in Article III leaves no room for other interpretations.

The paramount consideration in the document is the safeguarding of the observance of human rights and international humanitarian laws. There is a commitment (in principle, for the nth time) that the parties will cooperate with each other and with human rights groups, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross in ensuring the respect for and observance of human rights and international humanitarian laws in Mindanao.

What is perhaps the source of gaps and misunderstanding among those who still have to read the document is the so-called implementation of projects as defined in Article V.

The context of this article is the immediate return of the internally displaced persons (IDPs), or evacuees, to their places of origin and their relief and rehabilitation, including the delivery of development projects in the conflict-affected areas.

There are no ifs, ands or buts when it comes to the immediate return of the IDPs to their original communities.

The displacement and destruction brought about by the all-out war of then President Joseph Estrada, then Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado and then Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes far exceeded all our nightmares and imagination.

Most of the evacuees have already been returned or resettled elsewhere other than their places of origin. There are still thousands that need to go back to their communities, rebuild their homes and begin picking up the pieces.

The document speaks of the return of the IDPs or evacuees, NOT the return of the MILF combatants. Some people, especially those associated with the ignominious all-out war of the new millennium, like Reyes, will not make a distinction between civilians and combatants and consider them all MILF combatants or, at the least, potential MILF combatants.

Franchise

I believe the hullabaloo or the so-called controversy centers on the issue of who has the "patent" or the "franchise" when it comes to developing the conflict-affected areas—the euphemism for the former MILF camps and their environs.

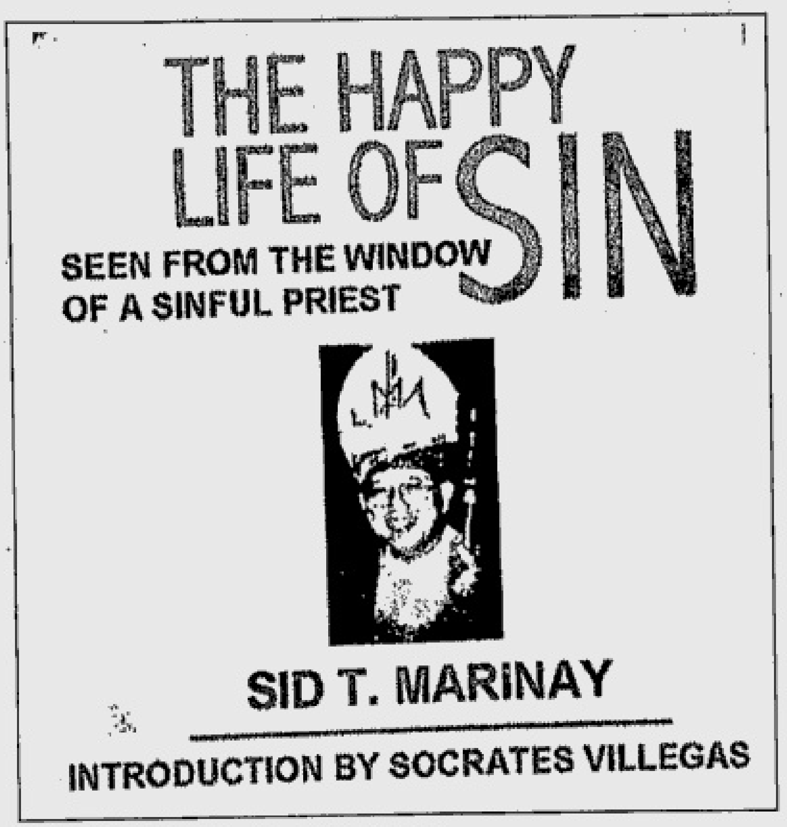
The "veterans" (Reyes and his ilk) of the all-out war keep insisting on the AFP's paramount role in the development of the concerned areas.

Believe it or not, it has produced a blueprint of development for the occupied MILF camps, made solely on the drawing board, just like our favorite armchair general who keeps proving his combat experience inside his cozy office or inside the occupied camps for photo ops to accept "surrenderers."

The two documents are faithful to the terms of reference set from the very beginning of peace talks. With this agreement, the talks between the government and the MILF that have been moving in circles now enter a new phase.

People may not like, or may not agree with, Bert Gonzales, but the man works—and works hard! We have to credit him for his tenacity, vision and tireless efforts in making Mindanao a more peaceful place.

The two temptations of Cardinal Sin


THE HAPPY LIFE OF SIN
SEEN FROM THE WINDOW OF A SINFUL PRIEST
SID T. MARINAY
INTRODUCTION BY SOCRATES VILLEGAS

AN INVITATION to the book launch.

From page A1

ing, almost a berserk enterprise."

"Such an approach is quite effective in its attempt to depict a postmodern cardinal," it says.

First temptation

As the cardinal related to Marinay, the first temptation occurred soon after a bishop brought the young Sin to the United States to serve as his secretary and speechwriter.

They stayed at an orphanage.

One night when "Father Jim" (Sin's character in the book) was about to go to bed; "a girl of about 17 or 18 knocked on his door and quite openly asked him to sleep with her."

The account read: "To the invitation, he replied in a way that would not offend her, 'I am a priest,' and the girl who did not seem to understand what he was talking about replied, 'But no one will know.' To which the tempted priest replied, 'I am too tired tonight, we will do it tomorrow.'

The girl then left the room."

The account continued: "And the following day, Father Jim very early in the morning left the place and a note to his bishop that it was necessary for him to leave the place and that he would just later on explain the reason."

The second temptation happened when Sin was assigned for a night at the home economics building of a public school.

As Father Jim was praying the rosary before going to bed, "a beautiful girl slipped into his room," the account read. "He was too tired to lock his room. It was not that the girl was beautiful because it was dark. She was beauty herself."

The girl was a "local beauty queen" who had "a special admiration for the young charismatic priest."

"He explained to her that it was not proper for them to talk together alone in that place at that time. She was a decent girl, and she left," the account read.

It continued: "To this incident, the young priest jokingly remarked with his typically wicked grin, 'When she left, I regretted.' Then he took a cold shower to remove the kind of euphoria that was flooding over him."

Detachment

This was how Marinay summed up the views on celibacy of the now 74-year-old prince of the Church: "As soon as you want to cling to one particular thing, everything else escapes you, whereas by detachment you can enjoy everything without actually possessing anything in particular. That's the key to voluntary celibacy, without which chastity would make no sense at all."

In the synopsis, Marinay said his first-person perspective was "inspired by an overwhelming sense of gratitude," making the book "a very warm personal tribute to the cardinal."

The book's launching came at a time when the Catholic Church not only in the Philippines but also in other parts of the world is being rocked by sex scandals, including the abuse of children by men of the cloth.

Body of US congressman's lover found

From page A1

family. The Levy family will remain in our prayers," his lawyer said in a statement.

Lawyer Mark Geragos also criticized Washington police. "This is not a red-letter day for the DC police," he said. "Gary had nothing to do with Chandra's disappearance."

The Levys remained secluded in their home in Modesto, California. They were said to be distraught and did not immediately plan to appear in public.

"Two parents have just received the most horrifying news they could ever receive," family spokesperson Judy Smith said outside the family's home. "Certainly no parent would think they would ever bury their child. It's usually the other way."

Announcement

In a late-afternoon news conference, Ramsey said simply: "The remains found earlier today are in fact those of Chandra Levy."

The police chief said the case was now a death investigation, but he stopped short of calling it a criminal case, pending word about how she died.

Dr. Jonathan Arden, the medical examiner, said he had received all the bones discovered in the park, but declined to describe their condition or say how long it might take to determine when and how Levy died.

Arden said a Smithsonian anthropologist would help analyze the bones.

Levy disappeared sometime after logging off her computer about 1 p.m. on May 1, 2001. When police searched her apartment they found her wallet, credit card, computer and cell phone. Only her keys were missing.

Police investigators, who had been severely criticized for not pursuing the case vigorously, searched intensively but turned up no solid clues.

They looked at a variety of theories—murder, suicide or that Levy had gone into hiding or lost her memory.

They questioned Condit several times but repeatedly said lawmaker was not a suspect.

Police had found evidence last year on Levy's laptop computer that she searched a website for the park's Klingle Mansion on the day she vanished.

Bones, a jogging bra, tennis shoes and other items were found 1.6 km north of the mansion and about 6.4 km away from Levy's apartment.

Friends had said she frequented the park, located in northwest Washington. Police had earlier scoured the sprawling park, to no avail.

Internship

Levy came to Washington for an internship with the Bureau of Prisons. In late April 2001, her internship was abruptly cut short when supervisors learned she was ineligible to continue because she had finished her college coursework the previous December.

A sociable, earnest student who enjoyed travel abroad with her family and fitness exercises, Levy was last seen on April 30 when she canceled her membership at a health club near her apartment.

She had been preparing to return to California for graduation from the University of Southern California and sent her parents an e-mail on May 1 noting airfares for the trip home.

The Levys called the police five days later when they could not reach her, and her father also telephoned Condit asking for his help.

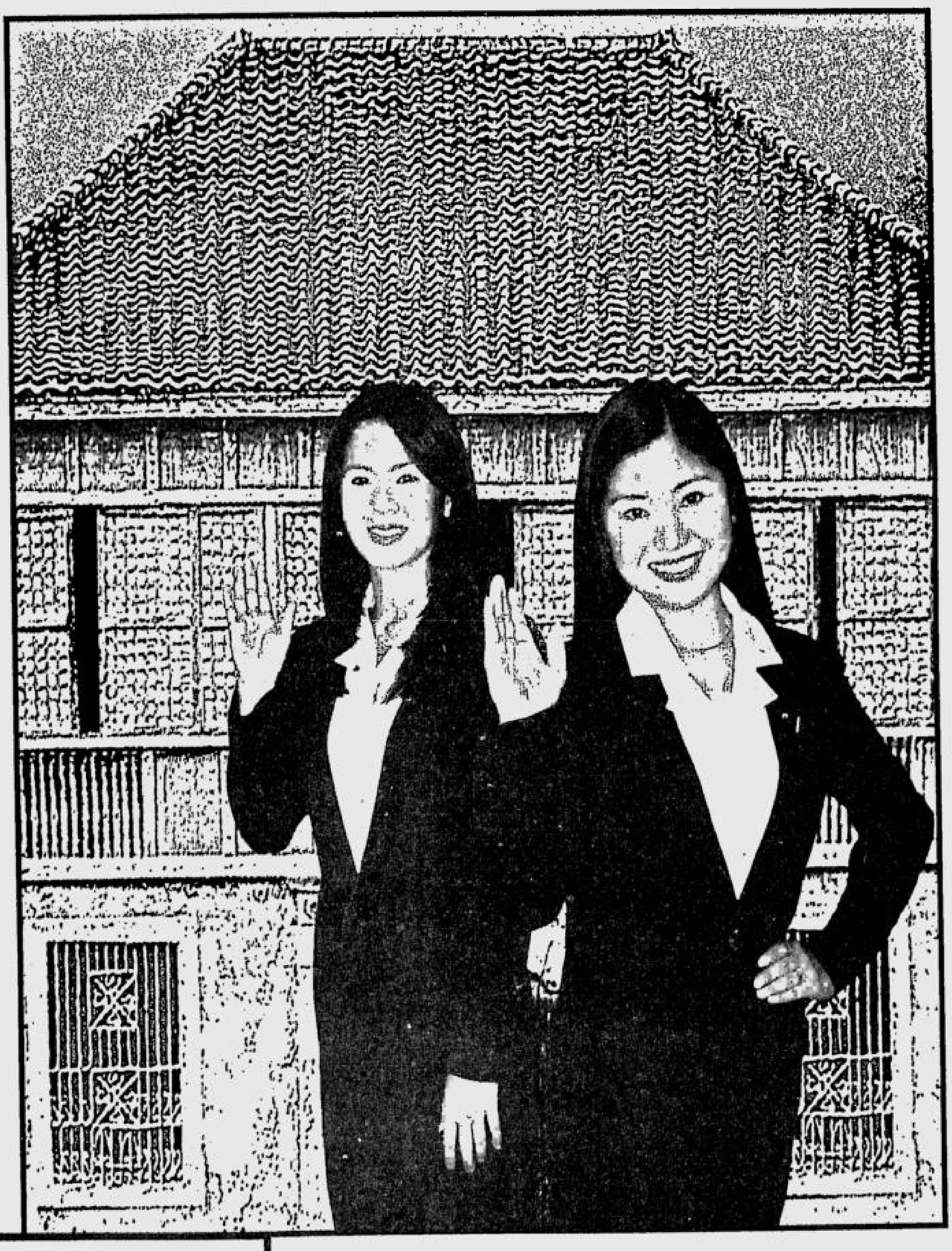
Condit called Levy a good friend and established a reward fund to help find her. Last July, he reportedly told police he was having an affair, though publicly he never made such a disclosure, saying only they shared a close relationship.

Condit, abandoned by all but a few Democratic allies, lost the Democratic primary in March to former protégé Dennis Cardoza, a state assemblyman.

After Levy's disappearance, police searched Condit's apartment with his consent and obtained a DNA sample from him. Condit submitted to a lie detector test arranged by his lawyer, who said the congressman was found to be truthful when denying any knowledge about what happened to Levy.

A grand jury has been reviewing Levy's disappearance and whether Condit or his aides obstructed the investigation. The grand jury subpoenaed documents from Condit last year. *AP*

The sun shines bright in Baliuag, Bulacan



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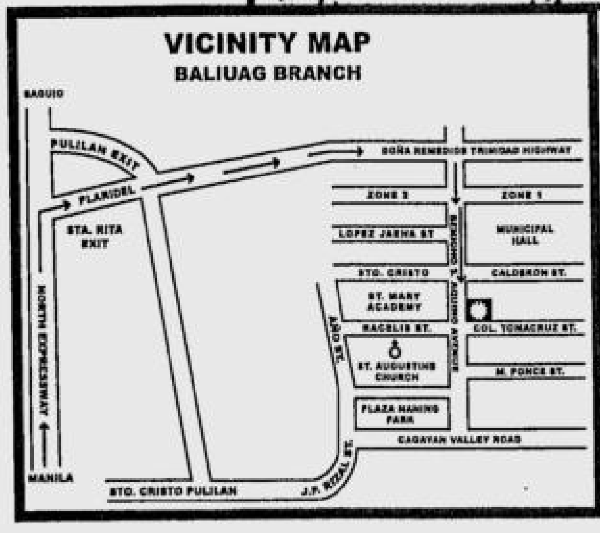
Inauguration
Today! May 24, 2002



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SPORTS

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(in exact order)

PBA FINALS

Aces force Game 7 against Hotdogs

GAME SUNDAY *(Araneta Coliseum)*
5:30 p.m.—Purefoods vs Alaska

By June Navarro

ALASKA prevented Purefoods from running away with the title as the Aces hacked out an 85-78 victory and forced a deciding Game 7 in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup Finals at the Araneta Coliseum last night.

The Aces smothered the Hotdogs in the third quarter and went to Rodney Santos, James Head and Ron Riley on the offensive end as they went on to tie the best-of-seven series at three-all.

Gaining psychological advantage, the Aces possess the momentum against the Hotdogs in their do-or-die championship tiff on Sunday.

The Aces had won three of their last four Game 7 trips, including the last one against San Miguel Beer in the 1998 All-Filipino Cup.

In contrast, the Hotdogs had lost three straight championships that went the distance which started in the All-Filipino Cup in 1992.

"They (Hotdogs) spent a lot of energy in the last three games and obviously they failed to sustain it this time around," said Alaska coach Tim Cone, who is looking for an 11th title overall since 1994.

"We just tried to hold them off and pushed them to a Game 7," added Cone.

Santos, who, prior to Game 6 averaged a measly 2.6 points in the series, came out of his shell and contributed 12 important points that helped the Aces a lot.

A triple by Santos midway in the third set the stage for a rout. Head and Riley then began their demolition job of the Hotdogs, who suddenly crumbled without Kelvin Price on the floor.

Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio opted to save Price for last and left Derrick Brown to handle everything for the Hotdogs.

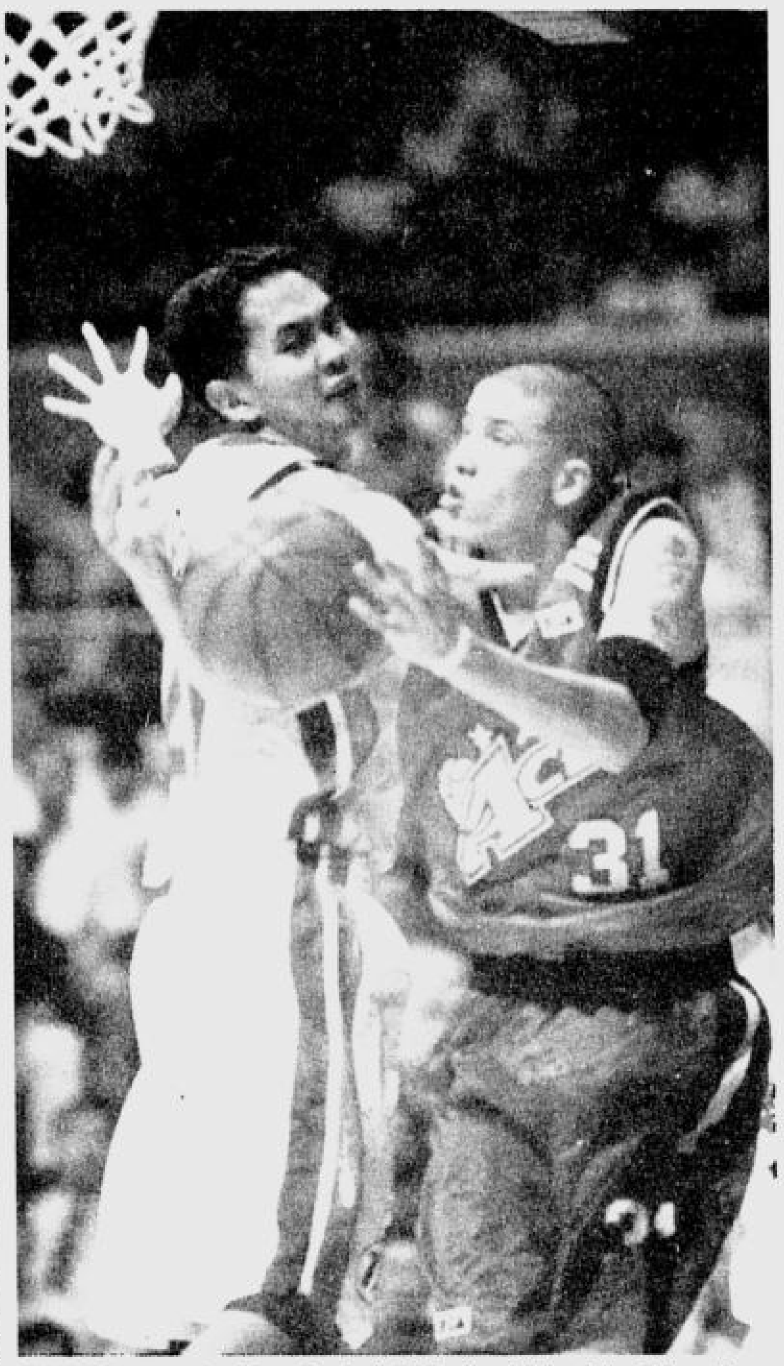
But the Aces were too much for Brown to contain as Head and Riley pushed Alaska to a comfortable 61-45 lead.

Scores:

ALASKA 85—Head 23, Arigo 16, Riley 14, Santos 14, Wallkvist 6, Allado 6, Lastimosa 5, Gahol 1, Noble 0, Newton 0.

PUREFOODS 78—Brown 27, Guerrero 13, Price 12, Raymundo 10, Yap 5, Yee 4, Evangelista 4, Victoria 3, Magsanoc 0, Patrimonio 0.

Quarters: 18-16, 42-33, 61-45, 85-78.



KERBY Raymundo of Purefoods (left) fouls a driving John Arigo of Alaska in Game 6 last night. Alaska won, 85-78, to force a do-or-die tussle on Sunday.

ROMY HOMILLADA

Ateneo-Hapee, Blu collide again

GAMES TODAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
3 p.m.—Kutitap vs Shark
5 p.m.—Blu vs Ateneo

By Dennis U. Eroa

FRONTRUNNING Ateneo-Hapee-Negros Navigation seeks to keep its distance against its closest pursuers as it tackles resurgent Blu Sun Power today in the PBL Chairman's Cup semifinals at the Makati Coliseum.

The Blue Eagles downed the Detergent Kings in the first round of eliminations, but lost in two overtimes, 91-88, during the second round. Since then, Ateneo has recovered its winning ways.

Gametime is set at 5 p.m., after the 3 p.m. clash between Kutitap and Shark Energy Drink, which is hoping to make the finals via the 5-of-8 incentive.

"It's hard to be on top. We'll continue working hard so that we can go all the way to the finals," said Ateneo mentor Joel Banal. "Blu is a very dangerous rival."

The Detergent Kings will carry an impressive six-game winning streak as they aim to repeat and force a two-way tie for the lead in the five-team, double-round semifinals.

Battle-grizzled Aries Dimaunahan and Eric de la Cuesta power the Detergent Kings with their fearless offensive thrusts, while Arnold Calo is a big help with his perimeter game.

Spicing up the tussle is the matchup between MVP frontrunner Enrico Villanueva and former rookie of the year Marlon Legaspi. Known for his power moves, the 6-foot-5 Villanueva is currently the league's top scorer (17 pts. average), while Legaspi (15 pts. average) deceives his foe with a soft touch in the perimeter and a tremendous shot-blocking skill.

If Magnum Membrere and Larry Fonacier can find their range from the outside, Blu's zone can fall into pieces. Wesley Gonzales, at 6-foot-3, can also make life harder for Dimaunahan in the backcourt. Celino Cruz also plays it cool during pressure situation.

Peja doubtful starter

SACRAMENTO, California —Peja Stojakovic can't get comfortable in his seat on the Sacramento Kings' bench.

"It's the worst time of year to be hurt, because this is the best part of the season," Stojakovic said. "It's no good to sit there."

The Kings' All-Star forward still isn't sure when he will return from the sprained ankle that has kept him out of four straight playoff games. The Kings and the Los Angeles Lakers are tied 1-1 in the Western Conference finals, which resume at Staples Center on Friday night (Saturday morning in Manila).

Stojakovic was on the court at the Kings' practice complex on Wednesday, shooting and jogging on his tender right ankle. He grimaced as he attempted lateral movements, and his workout wasn't lengthy. ***AP***

Spring Oil sets up duel vs ML Padala

CEBU CITY—Spring Cooking Oil trounced M. Lhuillier, 95-88, Wednesday night to arrange a showdown with ML Kwarta Padala for the National Interclub basketball title at the Cebu Coliseum here.

"We finally solved our weakness. We kept away from foul trouble and we made key adjustments in the final period," coach Tito Palma said after the Spring five owned by national shooting champion Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla moved a step closer to another big crown.

Spring won the national title last year and carried the RP colors in the recent ABC Champions' Cup where it finished seventh.

ML Kwarta Padala ousted Konkuk University of Korea, 86-64, in the other match to finish the elimination round tied with Spring at 3-1.

High-leaping Jeremy Robinson fired a game-high 34 points, including seven triples, to power Spring to victory.

Seven-time PBA Best Import Bobby Parks ably backed Robinson with 29 points.

Spring and Lhuillier fought on even terms in the first three quarters, but the Oil Makers broke away in the final canto behind the hot hands of Robinson and Parks.

Scores:

SPRING 95—Robinson 34, Parks 29, Co 10, Manuel 9, De Castro 6, Ricafuente 3, Reyes 2, Javier 2.

LHUILLIER 88—Ocanada 22, Passley 14, Sampelo 13, Latonio 9, Cantona 8, Almonte 8, Smith 7, Jaca 4, Enriquez 3.

Jones Cup: MBA gets BAP invitation

THE BASKETBALL Association of the Philippines has invited the Metropolitan Basketball Association to represent the country in the upcoming Jones Cup in Taiwan from July 13 to 24.

BAP President Quinteliano Z. Literal and secretary general Graham Lim relayed the invitation to MBA Commissioner Joaquin Loyzaga the other day.

The annual tournament is held in honor of the Fiba's first President R. William Jones and is considered as one of the more prestigious events in Asia.

"It is an honor for the MBA to be even considered for this task," said Loyzaga, who has played for the national team during his younger days. "I will leave the final decision to the MBA Executive Committee," he added.

For his part, MBA marketing and business development director Ramon Tuason expressed reservations on the possible Taiwan trip.

"We have to consider the fact that it (Jones Cup) runs smack in the middle of the season. Our national tournament's schedule has already been made and is set to begin on June 15th and I am also thinking of the possible effects that changing the schedule would have on our sponsors and most especially on the fans. However, I hope that our sponsors and fans would understand and support our decision," said Tuason.

The MBA has represented the Philippines in the last three editions of the Jones Cup. The Iloilo Megavoltz participated in 1999 but their stint was marred by a free for all with the Chinese-Taipei National Team. The Laguna Lakers performed well in 2000 and 2001 with Christopher Clay (now with the Osaka Pangasinan Waves) leading the Jones Cup in scoring in those two years. Jeffrey Flowers (now with the Olongapo Volunteers) ruled the rebounds in 2001.

Loyzaga clarified that the MBA is not totally closing its doors on the invitation.

Cotabato, Olongapo netters down rivals

COTABATO'S Hamza Macapendeg and Olongapo City's Patrick John Tierro scored contrasting wins yesterday to reach the boys' 18-under second round of the Toby's-Philta Age Group Tennis Challenge at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Macapendeg ousted seventh seed Chase Tinio, 1-6, 6-3, 6-2, to advance against Aklan's Mauric Lao, a 6-3, 7-6 (2) winner over Rolly Anasta.

Tierro, on the other hand, stamped his class over Jun Yosihashi, 6-0, 6-0, to advance against fifth seed Dino Ferrari, who clobbered Keneth Mendoza, 6-0, 6-1.

No. 2 Joseph Arcilla downed Nico Riego de Dios, 6-1, 6-3; No. 3 Yannick Guba blasted Samuel Cabati, 6-0, 6-0; NO. 6 Michael Basco outplayed Paul Navarro, 6-1, 6-2; and No. 8 Miguel Narvaez dumped Aulo Etcobanez, 6-0, 6-0, to also gain second-round berths.

In the boys' 16-under class, top seed Michael Basco clobbered Antonio Alvarez, 6-0, 6-0, to forge a second-round duel with No. 13 Perene Alina, a 6-1, 6-0 winner over Arthur Arogancia.

In other matches, No. 3 Arithmetico Lim defeated Mikof Manduriao, 6-0, 6-2; No. 4 Miguel Narvaez blanked Westley Hontiveros, 6-0, 6-0; No. 8 Ralph Kevin Barte outclassed Jomar Sucaldito, 6-0, 6-0; No. 9 Kyle Dandan beat John Wil Baldonado, 6-3, 6-2; No. 10 Raymond Villarete trounced Ronald de Castro, 6-0, 6-1; and Mauric Lao whipped Elaijah Colado, 6-0, 6-0.

Are we a poor nation pretending to be rich?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

MORE than 350 athletes who did the country proud in the last 50 years will finally receive their just rewards during awarding ceremonies on May 27 at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel, with no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor. But is it necessary to hold the affair at a five-story hotel and spend taxpayers' money on this undertaking?

Given the call of the President to take severe cutbacks in spending because of the prevailing hard times, I think it is not proper to hold the ceremony at a five-star hotel even if money-rich Pagcor is footing the bill. Methinks it is better to host the awarding rites at Malacañang Palace (or at the Philippine Sports Commission complex) not only to save some badly needed cash but also to make the occasion truly meaningful.

Be that as it may, I am glad that—at long last—Filipino athletes who won medals in the Olympics, Asian Games and World Championships of the last 50 years will be rewarded under the provision of Republic Act 9064, also known as the Sports Benefits and Incentives Act of 2001, the first sports bill signed into law by President Macapagal.

Now that it's here, it warms the heart to know that many of these neglected and virtually forgotten athletes will no longer have to wait and worry. With this law, the practice of giving cash incentives to outstanding Filipino athletes is now institutionalized so much so that the sport sector need not look for sponsors every time the Olympics, Asian Games or World Championships start.

***

A BREED APART. Thank you Haydee Coloso-Espino (of Airport Road, Mandurriao, Iloilo City) for your kind thoughts and appreciation. Haydee Espino, for the benefit of the present generation of sports fans, was once dubbed as "Asian Swim Queen" for being the most dominant female swimmer in the mid-1950s until the early 1960s. Now in her sixties and retired, Espino is the most bemedalled woman swimmer in Philippine sports history. A beneficiary of the Sports Incentives Law, she won a total of 10 medals in the Asian Games—three golds, five silvers and two bronzes—in the Asiad of 1954 in Manila, 1958 in Tokyo and 1962 in Jakarta. She said that during their time, they were not pampered compared to the present-day athletes who receive regular allowances, food and vitamins and other perks such as living quarters during their training. She also noted that the athletes of today are very lucky because they receive their incentives right away.

Craic hosts Monaco GP presentation May 26

THE CRAIC hosts the F1 Club Live anew in the club's presentation of the Monaco Grand Prix, the seventh round of 2002 Formula One Grand Prix Championship series on Sunday (May 26).

F1 Club Live's sponsors for the event are The Craic and Smart Communications.

The race on the highly technical track laid out on the streets of glitzy Monte Carlos is keenly awaited by every full-blooded F1 fan every season. F1 Club Live members are expected to troop to The Craic in full force to watch the most glamorous race of the year.

The Craic's superb bar chow, extensive liquor list, and its widescreen TV projection system and numerous TV sets make it the perfect venue for an enjoyable viewing of the F1 races.

The Craic is located at the third level of Max's Restaurant on Jupiter Street near Makati Avenue in Makati City.

"We are giving away cell phones to F1 soothsayers who will correctly predict the top three finishers in all the legs," said Noll Tinio, XtremeworX's president.

"We are inviting all F1 fans to join us at The Craic at 7 p.m. this Sunday to let them experience a most enjoyable way of watching the Monaco Grand Prix," he added.

Coseteng spearheads Caltex win

THE CALTEX Havoline team scored another major victory as lead driver Jody Coseteng carried on his streak at the Batangas Racing Circuit via a sweep of the Philippine National Touring Car Championship kickoff last weekend.

Coseteng's victory only proved that whatever the track condition, be it wet or dry, the efficiency of Caltex Havoline Fully Synthetic Motor Oil and the high performance cars prepared by Autoplus is indisputable.

"Again, we're thankful that the team has been blessed anew and Jody's victory in the Philippine National Touring Car kickoff only proved the combined superiority of Caltex Havoline Motor Oil and Autoplus is simply perfect for circuit racing," said Paul Familara, Caltex Philippines product category manager for lubricants sales and marketing.

The feat was a good head start for Coseteng's bid for a fourth straight crown and the prestigious 2002 Driver of the Year award.

Coseteng, also backed up by Globe Telecom and Red Horse, was undaunted by the presence of buddy and top driver Jojo Silverio as he quickly grabbed the pole from the start, built a wide margin midway in the race and finished the 15-lap race in 39:34.879 or 4.643 seconds ahead of Silverio.

Neither the heavy rains that rendered the track slippery had any effect on his car's performance. Coseteng stuck with wet tires that proved to be a wise decision as he pulled way ahead of his rivals who opted for dry tires, thinking the track would dry up fast.

Caltex-Beefeater teammate Nilo Pazcoguin also copped a decent fourth place finish in both races. And Pazcoguin's chances in the coming races could turn for the better as Autoplus is reportedly preparing a much better car.

"I'm very much confident on the car setup despite the big threat from my childhood buddy Jojo Silverio. The laptimes were consistent during the practice runs. In short, everything was well checked and all I have to do is drive it to victory. In the second race, the right choice of tires got me way ahead of others," said Coseteng.

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Texas 6, Minnesota 5; Toronto 8, N.Y. Yankees 3; Oakland 7, Baltimore 6; Detroit 2, Cleveland 0; Chicago White Sox 2, Boston 0; Tampa Bay 3, Seattle 2; Anaheim 7, Kansas City 6.

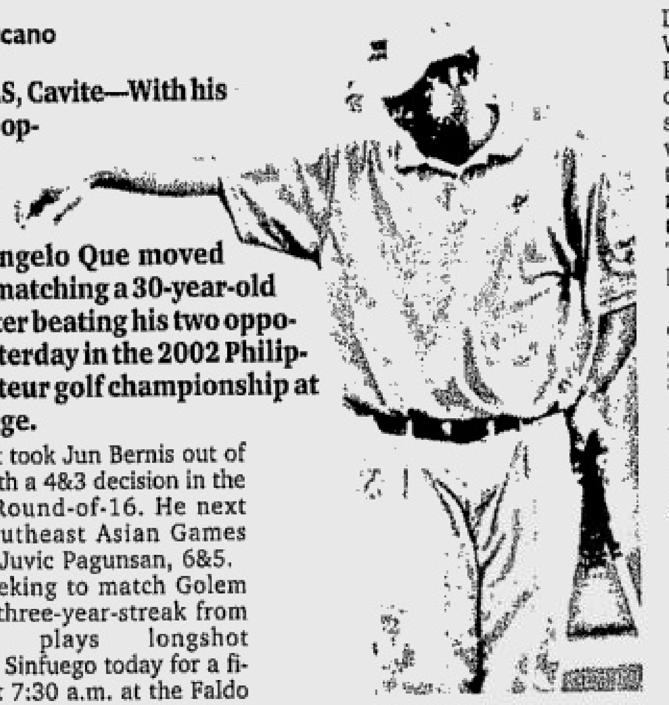
NATIONAL LEAGUE

Atlanta 2, Montreal 0; Philadelphia 5, N.Y. Mets 2; Cincinnati 6, Florida 2; Los Angeles 1, Milwaukee 0; Chicago Cubs 7, Pittsburgh 4; St. Louis 3, Houston 2; Colorado 5, San Diego 3; San Francisco 12, Arizona 5. ***AP***

RP AMATEURS

Que close to matching mark

By Jong Arcano


QUE

GEN. TRIAS, Cavite—With his two major opponents falling in shocking upsets, Angelo Que moved closer to matching a 30-year-old record after beating his two opponents yesterday in the 2002 Philippine amateur golf championship at Eagle Ridge.

Que first took Jun Bernis out of the way with a 4&3 decision in the morning Round-of-16. He next routed Southeast Asian Games champion Juvic Pagunsan, 6&5.

Que, seeking to match Golem Silverio's three-year-streak from 1970-72, plays longshot Godofredo Sinfuego today for a finals slot at 7:30 a.m. at the Faldo course of the country's biggest golf complex.

Sinfuego, an ex-caddie from Iloilo, first downed Hanson So, 1 up, then ended the giant-killing run of jungolfer Judson Eustaquio with a 3&2 decision.

Earlier, Eustaquio upset Marlon Dizon, 4&3, in the biggest reversal of the tournament sponsored chiefly by DHL Philippines and Wide Wide World Express with the support of Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, Inc. and the Philippine Sports Commission.

JR Tanpinco goes up against eliminations topnotcher Jerome Delariarte in the other semis encounter.

Tanpinco ousted Cookie La'O, 1 up, and Jun Jun Plana in 19 holes.

Delariarte advanced against Gene Bondoc and Artemio Murakami.

SPORTSWATCH

Clorets entries vie for P1-M prizes

THE FINAL hunt for Clorets packs hidden in nooks and crannies of Metro Manila's concrete and dizzying jungle gets going tomorrow, May 25, with 30 teams of battle-tested urban adventures jostling for the honor to become kings and queens of the 2002 Clorets Urban Hunt. But besides the honor of ruling the inaugurals of the unique urban adventure race, also at stake is the P100,000 top prize offered in the event which has gone through practically all major sectors of the big city during its first three elimination legs on April 25, May 5 and May 11.

2 bronze medals for Escollante

LEONORA Escollante won two bronze medals in the recent ninth Asian Canoe Championships in Tehran, Iran, but they were enough to put the Philippines in the Asian and world canoe and kayak maps. Escollante was called "Iron Woman" by athletes and officials alike who attended the championships played in close to chilling weather when she finished third in both the women's 1,000 and 500 meters touring kayak events. "*Napaka*-proud *ko bilang isang* Filipino," said Escollante via an overseas phone call.

Family Futbol calls for enthusiasts

FAMILY Futbol organizers are now calling on all football loving folk who can form "family" teams to come out and join the ongoing family challenges and the upcoming Family Futbol League. Interested parties may text 0916-3660389 for more information. Debuting AC Server meets veteran FC Mañoza on June 1 at 4 p.m. at the Alabang Country Club. On June 7, the "Match of the Month" pits Real Deportivo Garcia against Razon-Hagedorn FC.

R&B Farm emerges solo champ

NEVER-SAY-DIE R&B Farm I of Rep. Claude Bautista and Boyboy Roa boosted its stock in the National Cockers Association circuit by scoring six stirring points yesterday and emerging solo champion of the NCA 7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum. Mulawin of Frank Berin and Rep. Rudy Albano tallied 5-1/2 points to finish second while Alan Tan's Nevada Fantastic Kalvin posted five points to wind up third. Binangonan MK of Gov. Ito Ynares and Manny Kho and Ucap International June 4, 6, 8 of Vic Yu landed next with 4-1/2 points, followed by Cat Stingers of Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco, Phoenix of Mario Villamor, R&B Farm II, Winning Time DVH-Hobo I and BL RQP RFP with four points apiece. On May 27-29, another blockbuster NCA 7-Cock Derby will be held, also at the Big Dome. It will be hosted by Alan Tan, John Capinpin, Pampanga's Madlambayan brothers, Ruel Feliciano and Sons and the NCA.

Nestlé announces Milo Marathon elims

THE 2002 National Milo Marathon was formally launched yesterday at the Bayview Park Hotel. Yves Manghardt, representing sponsor Nestlé Philippines, said the event demonstrates the long-standing interest of Nestlé in promoting the benefits of an active sports lifestyle starting at a young age. "The marathon," he said, "is a continuing proof of Nestlé's commitment to support the development of young people through sports." Regional eliminations will be held in the cities of Davao, Roxas, Metro Manila, Lipa, Tacloban, Tuguegarao, Kidapawan, Olongapo, Cagayan de Oro, Naga, Baguio, and Cebu from July 7 to Nov. 24. The national final is on Dec.8. Co-sponsors of this year's event are Bayview Park Hotel, Cebu Pacific, Ford Philippines, adidas and the Department of Tourism. *Emil Cabrera*

FEU, Angeles Club jins share honors

FAR Eastern University and Angeles Taekwondo Club (ATC) jins shared the honors by collecting two gold medals each in the senior division of the recent Milo All-Women's taekwondo championships a the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. FEU's Heraldin Quesada and Imee Esternon and ATC's Rhea Castro and Retchield Galope prevailed in their respective classweights. Quesada beat teammate Juvy Rioveros and Esternon toppled UP's Ria Carmela Cruz in the feather and lightweight categories, respectively. Castro outsteadied Batangas Gym's Josalyn Liana and Galope whipped UP's Raya Maala in the fly and heavy finals, respectively. Also emerging as senior gold medalist were finweight Lou Ann Villajoquin of Team Sport, bantam Twinkle Catalan of Army and welter/middle Johanna Laguitao of St. Scholastica's College. The other winners: Juniors--Maria Abigail Austria, CSA, finweight; Deexee Sanchez, UE, fly; Radha Catarig, Muntinlupa Sweat Gym, bantam; Emy Figueroa, Pampanga, feather; Elaine Alora, Laguna, light; Esther Marie Singson, Central Gym, welter; Jenny Terry Jeciel, NBC Cavite, light middle/middle; and April Interno, Rizal, light heavy/heavy. Gradeschool (advance)--Alyssa Bianca Bonifacio, Batangas, over 4-0 to 4-3 (up to 10 years old); Ynah Bonifacio, Batangas, over 4-3 to 4-6 (up to 12); Valine Mae Calmerine, Central Gym, over 4-6 to 4-9 (up to 12).

Louie makes comeback fight today in San Jose

ESPINOSA

FORMER two-time world champion Luisito Espinosa hopes to shock the boxing world when he battles 34-year-old Colombian knockout artist Ever Beleno in the inaugural card of the Budweiser Fight Night at the Compaq Center in San Jose, California today.

Espinosa, who lost the WBC bantamweight crown to Mexico's Cesar Soto in a controversial decision before a highly partisan crowd in El Paso, Texas in May 1999, is in shape to win by knockout, according to his new manager, Noel Rivera.

A win today would set Espinosa up for a possible shot at the world crown owned by John Tapia.

Espinosa is 45-10-0, with 24 knockouts. Beleno is 38-9-0, with 35 knockouts.

Espinosa lost on an eleventh-round technical decision in a title fight against Guty Espadas Jr. in Merida, Mexico, on April 14, 2000, due to a head butt.

He came back with an impressive fourth-round TKO over Ramon Aragon in October 2000, but took a beating at the hands of Augie Sanchez in January 2001, losing by a fourth-round TKO.

Since his loss to Park Yong Kyun in 1992, Beleno scored a string of eight knockouts.

Migellano tops billiards event

MENLEE Migellano topped the grand finals of the Powerpool Nights billiards competition at the Cactus Bar in Libis recently.

Migellano, who made the finals after winning the monthly event at Ortigas, pocketed P20,000 cash plus gift items from major sponsor Jim Beam, the real American bourbon whiskey.

Michael Mopera emerged second, followed by Toti Buendia. Vee Jay Asunncion settled for fifth in this event also sponsored by Wave 89.1 and Yehey.Com.

Twilo's DJ Mulan provided non-stop house and party music as the event was aired live on Wave 89.1.

The grand finals capped a 13-week event that brought pool enthusiasts and their friends together amid fun and revelry in different well-known nightspots.

COJUANGCO CUP WINNER
Horseowner Jun Almeda (second from left) receives the Cojuangco Cup championship trophy from San Miguel Corporation executive Ira Maniquis (right, representing race honoree Eduardo M. Cojuangco Jr.), following the impressive victory of champion filly Golden Ballet in the recent P1.67-M first leg of the 2002 Triple Crown Championship at the Santa Ana Park. Witnessing the event are (from left) Commissioner Jimmy Dilag and Chairman Andrew Sanchez of the sponsoring Philippine Racing Commission.

RACING TIPS

At San Lazaro By Mr. 999

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Race 2—1. Rumaragasa 2. Mr. Lucas 3. Prickly Heat
Race 3—1. Rainbow Dazzler/Simply Great 2. Meal Ticket 3. Primero de Mayo 4. King Aldrin 5. Ensaguida
Race 4—1. Yes Sir 2. Al's Princess 3. Kathy Rose 4. Fly Away
Race 5—1. Lucky Gambit 2. Happy Return 3. Search for Gold
Race 6—1. Bulwak 2. Free Entrance 3. Winning Prize 4. Exchange Deal 5. Hole in One
Race 7—1. Señor Raggaas 2. Royal Worship 3. Irish Star 4. Bullhorn 5. Notable
Race 8—1. Flirt 2. Majestic Ruler 3. Perfect Lyza
Race 9—1. Sharp Bullet 2. No Compromise 3. Replica 4. With Feeling 5. Love Song 6. Quean Storm

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1994, Nonoy Jopson finished the 1.5-K swim, 1.5-K run, 40-K bike and 9-K run in 2 hours, 20 minutes and 15 seconds to rule the junior division and place seventh overall in the Puma Hong Kong International Triathlon.

Woods seeks 4th title

DUBLIN, Ohio—Tiger Woods can tie the PGA Tour record for consecutive wins in a single tournament when he competes at the Memorial, a 4.5 million dollar event that begins here Thursday (Friday in Manila).

Woods' domination of the event has progressed from a two-stroke win in 1999 to five shots in 2000 to a whopping seven-shot triumph last year at the Muirfield Village Golf Club.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Mangulat

BASKETBALL: NBA Action at 7:30 p.m. (r – 8:30 p.m.) on ESPN

BADMINTON: Thomas and Uber Cup 2002 Semifinals, Evening Session at 10 a.m. (r) on Star Sports

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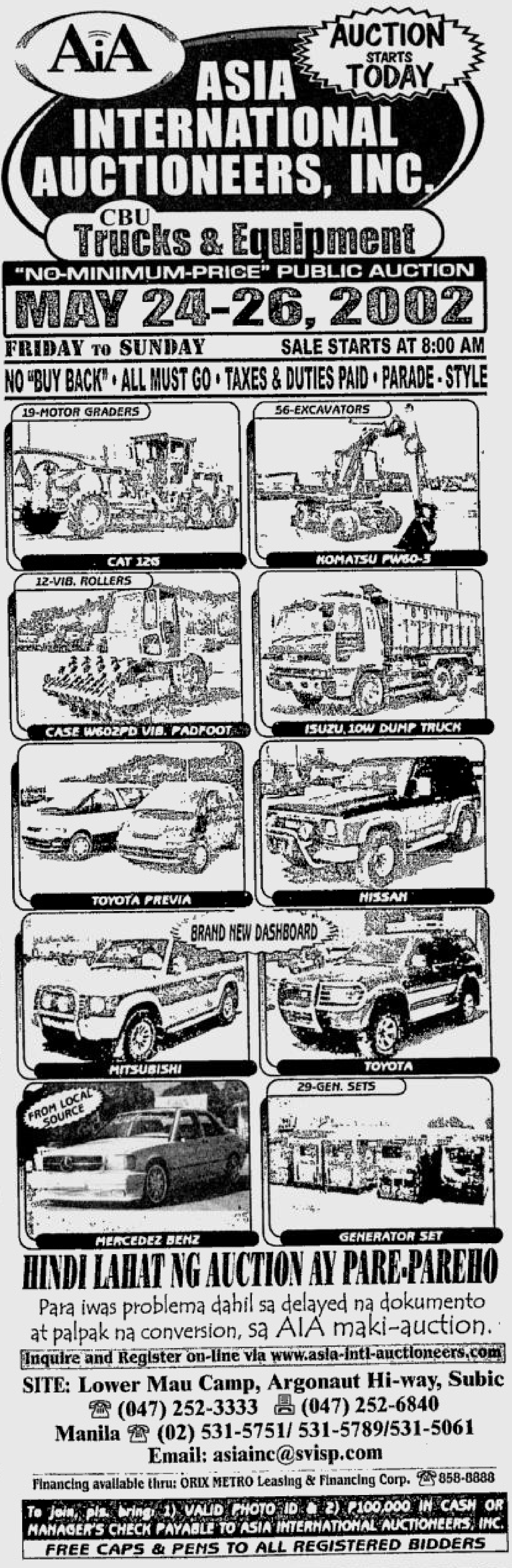
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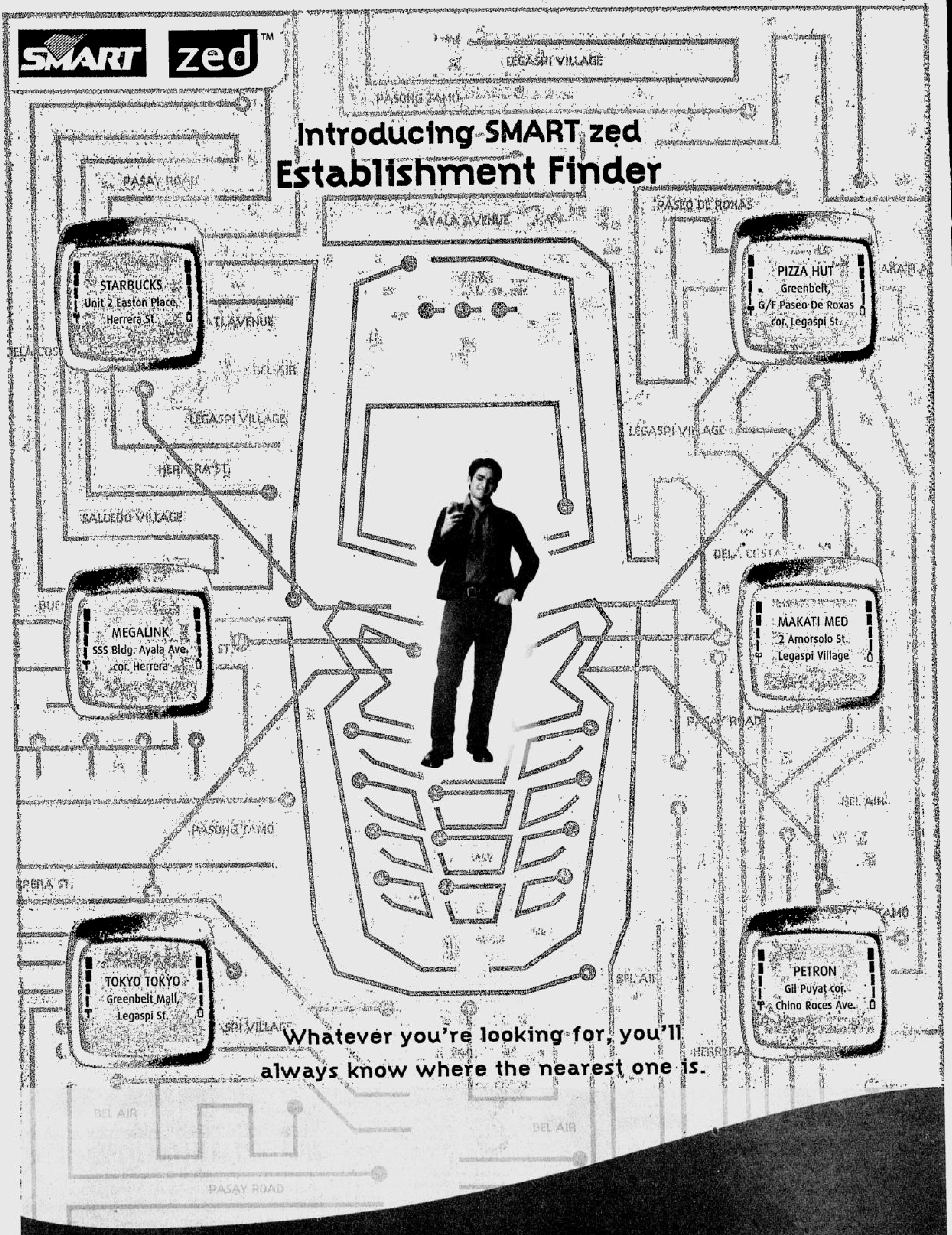
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DUNKIN' DONUTS	DUNKIN
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METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

▩ **62, 612 fake undies seized** /A27
▩ **Amusement tax cut ordinance signed into law** /A27
▩ **Bare Eye: A blind man runs and rules Philippine boxing** /A26

Pasay tries to become 'wholesome'

By Christian V. Esguerra

PASAY City, long known for its many girlie bars as well as for its motels, will try to rid itself of nightclubs.

Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad on Wednesday said he would try to convince club owners to venture into other, "more wholesome" businesses to help the city shed its image as the undisputed red-light district of Metro Manila.

He said he is planning to convert Roxas Boulevard—where most of the bars and nightclubs are located—into a commercial center with restaurants, coffee shops, and boutiques similar to establishments that have been drawing huge crowds to Eastwood City and Libis in Quezon City, Malate in Manila, and Rockwell in Makati City.

"Use your imagination," he said to club owners, particularly those operating on Roxas Boulevard. "The public will soon get tired of seeing women dancing in the nude. Think of other businesses."

The mayor decided to give the city a new look after club owners reportedly complained of a substantial decline in their

PASAY TRIES/ A27

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Confirmed: Shabu missing

WYCOCO

By Philip C. Tubeza

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco yesterday confirmed that several kilos of shabu seized from a suspect are missing from the NBI evidence vault.

But Wycoco told reporters the missing shabu was less than the amount earlier reported as missing.

He said that after a two-week investigation, the agency confirmed that "around seven kilos" of shabu were missing from the NBI Forensic Chemistry Division.

He said the special committee tasked to investigate the loss will submit its report and recommendations today.

"I'll make the decision (on what to do with the erring officials) when I

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CALTEX What Drives You

Young holdup suspects say they want to go back to school

By Alcuin Papa

THREE young men who claim they wanted to go back to school might not be able to see classrooms for a long time. Makati City police arrested them for trying to hold up an architect Wednesday night.

Police said the suspects were Casper de Leon, 18, a 17-year-old and a 16-year-old, all of Barangay Tejeros, Makati City.

The three young men were positively identified by architect Carlito Corpuz, 35, also of Makati, as those who held him up at about 8:15 p.m. Wednesday at the Greenbelt Mall in Legaspi Village, Makati.

Corpuz told police that he had just shopped for school supplies for his children and was waiting a taxi when the three young men approached him, pointed a knife to his side and announced the holdup.

He said they took his wallet, watch and cell phone and then ran away.

A Makati police patrol unit spotted the fleeing young men and chased them. Under questioning, the three said they would be first year college students at a private school in Makati City and they needed money to pay for their tuition.

Police were able to recover the victim's cash and valuables and threw the three youths in jail.

Accreditation of testing centers put on hold

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has formed a committee to look into alleged irregularities in the accreditation of vehicle emission testing centers which is set to become a requirement in the annual registration of commercial and private vehicles this year.

Trade and Industry Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. said the DTI had to form an ad hoc committee on the accreditation of private emission testing centers (PETCS) due to alleged anomalies in the pre-qualification of 186 companies.

He said most of the applicants have spurious and suspiciously similar-looking documents.

Cristobal said that the conduct of the review will push back by one or two months the implementation of PETCS, originally set in July.

Cristobal said the trouble began when the Department of Transportation and Communication decided to ease up on the pre-qualification of PETC applicants last month.

But Cristobal admitted that the DTI agreed to the changes in the guidelines for pre-qualification.

Cristobal said the government relaxed its PETCS investment requirements, which entailed P1.6 million to P1.7 million for each lane. A typical testing center must have four lanes.

Cristobal said government is prepared to scratch out all the pre-qualified applicants if the ad hoc committee findings warrant such action. He said he ordered the review of the guidelines to ensure that small and medium enterprises will have a fair chance in getting licenses for PETCS.

The DTI and DOTC have only pre-qualified 15 applicants since they started screening in November. Cristobal said this number would be inadequate to serve the needs of 98 Land Transportation Offices nationwide.

DENNIS SABANGAN

CHILDREN OF DEMOLITION

Young residents of Barangay San Vicente in Diliman, Quezon City join their elders in a demonstration at the University of the Philippines administration building to protest the demolition of their community near the campus. University and city authorities said they were planning a relocation package for the families to be displaced by the demolition.

Scientific sessions for chest physicians

THE 9TH postgraduate course of the American College of Chest Physicians Philippine chapter will be held on June 7 and 8 at the Benigno Aquino Center in Tarlac City.

The Tarlac Medical Society is a co-sponsor of the course. The theme is "Tools and Strategies in Pulmonary Medicine."

The scientific sessions are intended for pulmonologists, internists, pediatricians and general practitioners. Among the topics are "Managing the Ups and Downs of Asthma," "Switch Antibiotic Therapy in Pneumonia," "Persistent Cough," "TB in Pregnancy," "Diagnosis of Lung Cancer" and "Smoking Cessation."

The people behind the postgraduate course are Dr. Benjamin S. Lazo, ACCP president, and Dr. Tito C. Atienza, overall chair of the ACCP organizing committee.

For more information, call the ACCP office at 724-8536.

METROBRIEFS

'Sweet' hijackers fall

POLICE on Tuesday arrested Ruel Alaras, 34, and Arnulfo Artajo, 39, residents of San Isidro, Tarlac, for hijacking a van loaded with sugar and other goods in Pangasinan. Valenzuela police chief Senior Supt. Leopoldo Urena said his men and members of the Pangasinan police force caught the suspects just as they were unloading the hijacked goods worth P500,000 at the East Poblacion Market in Umingan, Pangasinan. Urena said the suspects were members of a six-man hijack syndicate. He said his men are now hunting down the other suspects.
Tina Santos

Pastor's pockets picked

SEVENTH Day Adventist pastor Joel Solomon, 43, said he lost P30,000 in cash and valuables to a gang of pickpockets in Manila. Solomon, of Pangasinan, was on board an FX taxi on Taft Avenue when eight men pounced on him at about 11 a.m., taking his wallet which he said contained P15,000 in cash, $100, a check worth P10,000, his driver's license, clergy identification card, and other documents, police said. The pastor, who was on his way back to the province, told police that one of the men dropped several coins on the taxi floor, another asked Solomon to pick them up, while a third picked the pastor's pockets.
Philip Tubeza

Couple shot in the dark

TRICYCLE driver Joselito Balimbing and his wife, Arlie, of Valenzuela City, were shot at close range Wednesday night, police said. They are reported to be in critical condition at the Jose Reyes Memorial Hospital. Police said Joselito, 35, was on his tricycle as he waited for his 24-year-old wife and a nephew, who had gone to buy food from a store on Gen. Luis Street in Paso de Blas. At about 10 p.m. two men emerged from an alley and shot him and his wife. Police said Joselito was shot seven times, while his wife, an overseas contract worker who had just arrived from work abroad, was hit in the thigh. *Tina Santos*

Masher in the slammer

LABORER Bobby Torillo, of Valenzuela City, found himself in jail on Tuesday for allegedly molesting a 10-year-old neighbor, police said. The victim's parents lodged a complaint with the women's and children's desk of the city police, and accused Torillo of molesting their daughter in April and again on May 3. They said Torillo snatched their daughter, who was on her way to a nearby store, and took her to a vacant lot where he mashed her private parts. Police said the man threatened to kill the girl if she revealed her ordeal to anyone. *Tina Santos*

Girl, 2, drowns in Navotas

THE BODY of 2-year-old Apple Manayon was found floating just after midnight Tuesday near her residence at the Bayside in Daanghari, Navotas. PO1 Jamercon Margate said the girl's father Ronnie last saw his daughter alive the night before. Police said the father left her side while she slept in their shanty, which was built on bamboo stilts. A few hours later, the father found to his horror that his daughter was no longer in the shanty. PO1 Margate believed the girl woke up from sleep and fell in the water. *Tina Santos*

Fire in Valenzuela

FAULTY electrical wiring was said to have caused the fire that razed a building in Valenzuela City on Wednesday. FO1 Victor Infante of the city fire department said the blaze started in the stockroom of Tricentennial Holdings on P. Faustino Street in Barangay Punturin, Valenzuela at about 2:30 p.m. He identified the owner of the building as Edilberto Yujueco of Quezon City. It took firefighters three hours to put out the fire. Infante pegged property damage at P500,000. *Tina Santos*

Councilors afraid to lose votes in 2004, says mayor

By Christian V. Esguerra

PASAY City councilors seeking reelection or wanting higher positions in 2004 might spell doom for the controversial Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad on Wednesday hinted that members of the city council might decide against the transfer of the airport's aviation fuel depot to Barangay 201 if only to avoid antagonizing their constituents.

"The councilors are really afraid to lose votes in 2004," he admitted to reporters. "The council has to be solomonic. It has to weigh everything carefully."

Failure to move the fuel farm from its present location between Naia Terminals 1 and 2 might delay the opening of Terminal 3 in December, airport officials warned.

Trinidad on Wednesday left it to the councilors to decide whether to allow the transfer of the fuel facility.

Facing staunch opposition from residents, airport officials have been trying to convince the city council to pass a resolution authorizing the mayor to issue a certificate of no objection to the transfer.

But the council recently filed an ordinance banning the establishment of fuel depots, which are highly prone to terrorist attacks.

Edgar Manda, general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority, had asked the council to allow the transfer of the airport's gas facility, warning that it would be more dangerous to keep the depot in its present location.

Airport officials are trying to beat the December deadline opening of the Naia Terminal 3 to avoid paying huge amounts in fine.

A blind man runs and rules Philippine boxing

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THE RECENT death of an overmatched Filipino boxer in Tarlac has created a big stir.

Everybody again wants to know what's wrong with Philippine boxing.

Well, a plain look would show that RP boxing is still up on its feet.

But, if it were a fighter, Philippine boxing would be weak and shaky.

OK, it's gallantly trying to put up a fight, but it's totally defenseless and it continues to be hit silly.

This was the picture we got after watching Ms Jessica Soho report on the state of the prizefight business in the country on Wednesday.

Ms Soho was merciless in her condemnation over GMA 7.

If she were a fighter, Ms Soho would have been a clinical knockout artist.

She had both control and precision.

She had been to the foxholes in Afghanistan and Basilan. But her moving thesis on the state of boxing here was itself a knockout.

***

Anyway, as graphically shown in "Jessica Soho Reports," Philippine boxing is a feeble, blind old man crossing a killer fast lane unaided.

That man is Irving Jardenil, a matchmaker who was honored for outstanding achievements during the last birthday of Flash Elorde.

Jardenil, gray and wrinkled, was again in the spotlight.

But this time, he had to parry accusations for having irresponsibly put up the mismatch that led to the death of Maruel Sayas.

Sayas died after being knocked out by third-ranked RP super bantamweight Alex Escaner in Tarlac last month.

***

Ms Soho, after seeing the big fault, wasted no time.

She zeroed in on Jardenil to ask him where he thought he had faulted.

There and then, Ms Soho got the shocking truth on why boxing tragedies will always hound the sport here.

Upon getting a faint reply, she finally realized she was talking to a hopeless blind man, a respected matchmaker at that.

Search me, Jardenil defended. He said he had no idea whatsoever of the records of both the late Sayas and Escaner.

Yes, Jardenil said those exact words. He admitted he was completely in the dark.

He had no inkling whatsoever of the records, the skills and faults, of both Sayas and Escaner.

In trying to evade fault, Jardenil unwittingly pointed to the Games and Amusements Board, the licensing body which should at least have the complete file on professional boxers.

***

If he knew Sayas had been laid off for nearly two years, and that he had been knocked out three times in the four times he had lost prior to his comeback, Jardenil suggested he would've disallowed the mismatch.

Maybe it was an alibi, a cheap *palusot* the blind man of Philippine boxing had tried to offer.

But that brief encounter with Ms Soho more than exposed the rottenness in the national boxing set-up.

International judge and referee Silvestre Ibainza, who acted as judge in the tragic Tarlac fight, swore there was something sickeningly wrong.

The third man in that bout, Robert Macasil, was himself coming back from a six-month suspension.

Anyway, the Jardenil admission that he failed to look into the respective records of both combatants more than confirmed the criminal negligence behind the death of Maruel Sayas.

***

But who's to blame?

Not the GAB, said its chair, Eduardo Villanueva.

Not the GAB boxing division, defended its head, Noli Flores.

Well, looking back, authorities had appeared ready to accuse Sayas of causing his own death.

In the first place, why did Sayas, after a one-and-half-year lay-off, agree to square off with Escaner, an extremely superior opponent who could be a national titleholder anytime?

Jessica Soho had a moving answer to the puzzle.

Sayas badly needed money. Reason: His girlfriend was already eight months pregnant.

The poor girl, in fact, has given birth to Sayas' first kid last week.

***

Who's to answer for all these?

The helpless father of Maruel Sayas, whose only fault was being poor?

Well, if government authorities had bothered to watch Jessica Soho zero in on the culprit, we should be having reforms soon.

In her wrap-up, Ms Soho wholeheartedly agreed to the suggestion that the government should establish a governing body for professional boxing here.

Those who claim to run the affairs of pro boxing in the Philippines are nothing more than carefree aficionados who rely on the whims of a misinformed matchmaker.

Unfortunately, Irving Jardenil, who blindly put up that tragic fight in Tarlac, could be tapped by Malacañang to help in the proposed national governing in boxing.

He has become a vital part of the sport.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, May 24, 2002
7th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **James 5:9-12**
Gospel: **Mk 10:1-12**

Jesus left Capernaum and went to the province of Judea, beyond the Jordan River. Once more crowds gathered around him and once more he taught them, as he always did. Some (Pharisees came and) put him to the test with this question, "Is it right for a husband to divorce his wife?" He replied, "What law did Moses give you?" They answered, "Moses allowed us to write a certificate of dismissal in order to divorce."

Then Jesus said to them, "Moses wrote this law for you, because you are stubborn. But in the beginning of creation *God made them male and female, and because of this, man has to leave father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one body. So they are no longer two but one body.* Therefore let no one separate what God has joined."

When they were indoors at home, the disciples again asked him about this and he told them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against his wife, and the woman who divorces her husband and marries another also commits adultery."

Commentary

The evangelist Mark goes straight to the point: marriage is an irreversible commitment. Jesus takes his stand; it is one of those times when he shocks everyone, including his disciples. Throughout the Bible love and fidelity are linked, and when the Gospel speaks of losing oneself as a condition of finding oneself, it is also valid for the couple.

And what if one of the two betrays the other? Here we are in the domain of human decision where each one must solve his or her own case and solve it according to the consciousness they already have of their Christian vocation. Others must not condemn them. But Jesus takes all authority away from those who pretend to calm the conscience of divorcees as if they had not fallen short of their Christian vocation.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Action to revive judgment—Sec. 6, Rule 39 of the Rules of the Court states that an action to revive judgment only requires proof of a final judgment which has to prescribed and has remained unexecuted after the lapse of five (5) years but not more than ten (10) years from its finality. Nowhere does the rule require proof that the judgment is still enforceable by and against the original parties who have die. While the action is still subject to defenses and counterclaims which arose after the judgment became effective, proof of the death of some of the parties is not required because the judgment can still be enforced by the executor, administrator or successor-in-interest of the judgment creditor against the judgment debtor. Petitioners further alleges that respondents are not the owners of the subject premises, hence the action must fail. An action to revive judgment is not meant to retry the case all over again. Its cause of action is the judgment itself and not the merits of the original action. The non-ownership by private respondents refer to the merits of the first civil case which has long been decided with finality and thus become conclusive between the parties. [Citations omitted][Justice Quisimbing Second Division, Enriquiez v. Court of Appeals, G. R. No. 137391, December 14, 2001].

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

62,612 fake undies seized

By Philip C. Tubeza

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) agents confiscated P1 million worth of underwear bearing fake signature trademarks, including Tommy Hilfiger, in Pasay City.

NBI Deputy Director Fermin N. Nasol said his men confiscated 62,612 pieces of fake underwear when they raided last week several shops.

He identified the shop owners as William Lim and Helen Lim, who ran stalls on the third floor of Saulog Vergara Building on Taft Avenue in Pasay City and at the Sunnyline Shopping Center on Taft Avenue Extension; Peter Sy and Rose Sy, and Jenny Tan, all of Sunnyline Shopping Center also.

Nasol said the NBI began investigating the shops after getting complaints from the lawyers of Tommy Hilfiger, Playboy, and H.D. Lee.

Lawyer Rafael Ragoz, chief of the NBI Intellectual Property Rights Division, said his men watched the suspected shops and, after buying items from them, confirmed that the shops were indeed selling underwear with fake signature brands.

The NBI obtained search warrants from Judge Nemesio S. Felix of the Makati Regional Trial Court.

In the afternoon of May 17, NBI agents raided the shops and confiscated the illegal underwear.

Nasol said the businessmen would be charged in court with violating the country's Intellectual Property Code.

Amusement tax cut measure signed into law

By Jerome Aning

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday afternoon asked film producers to make movies about the city's history to help in the city government's urban renewal program.

"Our city is rich in history and many things about Manila's history can be put in films," Atienza said as he signed into law an ordinance reducing by half the amusement tax being collected on local movies shown in Manila theaters.

Film producers participating in the Manila Film Festival in June witnessed the signing.

Under the ordinance, authored by Councilors Miles Roces and Pacifico Laxa, the 30 percent amusement tax will still be collected from the theaters, but half of the collection will be split between the theater owners and the movie producers.

Atienza said he does not mind City Hall losing revenues, which could be used in public projects and services, as long as good films are produced.

ATIENZA

Confirmed: Shabu missing

From page A25

receive the report," Wycoco said.

The missing shabu was part of the 250 kilos the NBI confiscated from Sandra Lim in Pasay City in December 2000.

The loss was discovered late last month after the Pasay City court handling Lim's case ordered that the shabu be burned at the Research Institute for Tropical Medicine in Muntinlupa City.

But when the Pasay court sheriff and the Dangerous Drugs Board checked the NBI evidence vault, they discovered that five plastic bags, containing 8.67 kilos of shabu, were missing.

Wycoco formed a special committee, headed by NBI intelligence chief Samuel Ong, to investigate the loss.

With court officials and members of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, NBI officials last week conducted a reinventory of the shabu in its custody.

"It was very transparent," the NBI director said. "The media, court officials, and NBI members were there."

He promised to file charges against those who would be found responsible for the disappearance of the drugs.

Pasay tries to become 'wholesome'

From page A25

earnings in the past few months.

Most Saturdays, girlie bars in the city are usually empty, probably because people choose to spend the weekend with their families, according to Trinidad.

He said he and other city officials would give their all-out support to owners who would convert their nightclubs into restaurants and other "wholesome" establishments.

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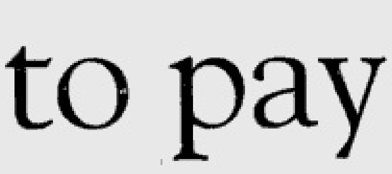

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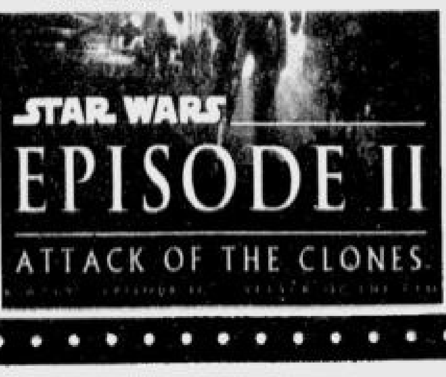

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5	SPIDERMAN
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1	STAR WARS 2
2	SNOW DOGS
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'Town and Country' available on video

WARREN Beatty, Diane Keaton, Andie MacDowell, Gary Shandling, Jenna Elfman, Nastassja Kinski and Goldie Hawn complete the powerhouse cast of the critically acclaimed sex-comedy, "Town and Country."

Directed by Peter Chelsom for New Line Cinema, the film is being released on video by C-Interactive Digital Entertainment with Wave 89.1.

"Town and Country" is a spun salad of light gags, sight gags and mostly right gags about two New York marriages in trouble.

Architect Porter Stoddard and respected designer Ellie Stoddard seem just fine after 25 years, while his pal, antiques dealer Griffin Miller is having a fidelity failure that brings matters to a boil with his own wife.

For original copies, call C-Interactive at 245-5011 to 12.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	AKALA MO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BENEATH LOCHNESS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	STAR WARS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	SPIDERMAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	STAR WARS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	FRUIT IS SWELLING
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	DEATH TO SMOOCHY
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	SPIDERMAN
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	STAR WARS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	KAULAYAW / SNAKE CHARMER
ODEON	STAR WARS
ODEON-2	SANA TOTOO NA
ROBEN	SANA TOTOO NA
TANDEM-1	ITLOG
TANDEM-2	IKA-7 GLORYA
TIMES	OCEAN 11 / ALI
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	SANA TOTOO NA
REMAR	AKALA MO
REMAR-2	STAR WARS
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	SANA TOTOO NA
B	KAPIRASONG GUBAT . . .
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	SANA TOTOO NA
CINEMA-2	BUKANG BIBIG
CINEMA-3	K-PAX
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SPIDERMAN
CINEMA-6	JASON-X
CINEMA-7	VIDEOKE KING
CINEMA-8	SCORPION KING
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	STAR WARS
CINEMA-12	SPIDERMAN
CINEMA-14	SPIDERMAN
CINEMA-15	SPIDERMAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SPIDERMAN
CINEMA-2	IN THE BEDROOM
CINEMA-3	STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
CINEMA-4	STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
CINEMA-5	DEATH TO SMOOCHY
CINEMA-6	STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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1 SPIDERMAN	1 IN THE BEDROOM	4 K-PAX	1 SPIDERMAN	1 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2	2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2	5 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2	2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2	2 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2
3 AKALA MO	3 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2 12:40,/3:30/6:20/9:10/12:00 MN GUARANTEED SEATS	6 SPIDERMAN	3 HARD BALL	3 SPIDERMAN
4 STAR WARS: EPISODE 2		7 DEATH TO SMOOCHY	Onstage 4 MARTIN NIEVERA BACK ONSTAGE May 24, 25, 31 & June 1	4 DEATH SMOOCHY
				5 IN THE BEDROOM

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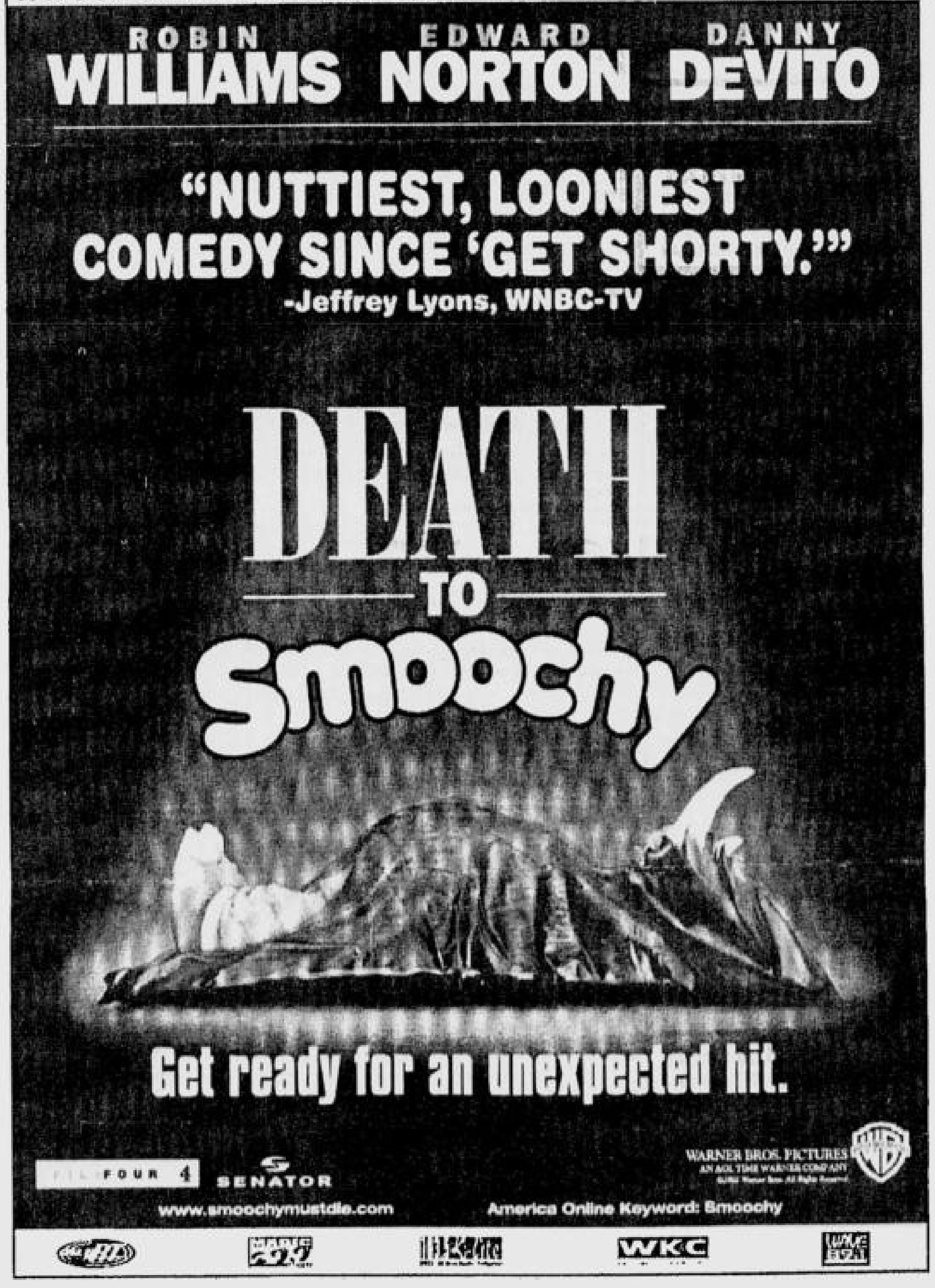

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SHOCKING THRILLER OPENS MAY 29!
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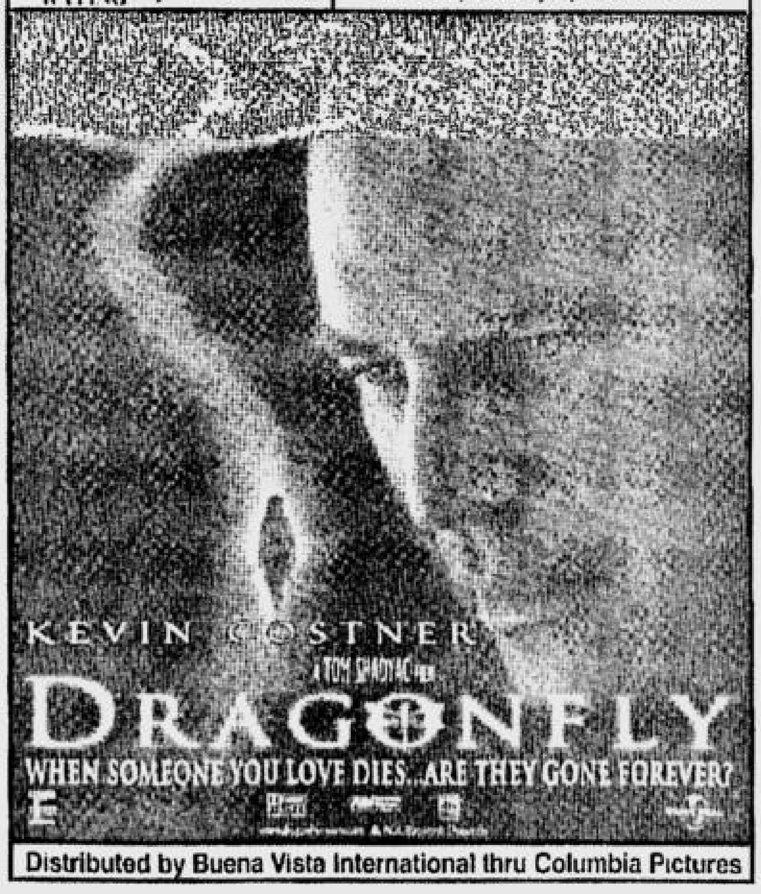

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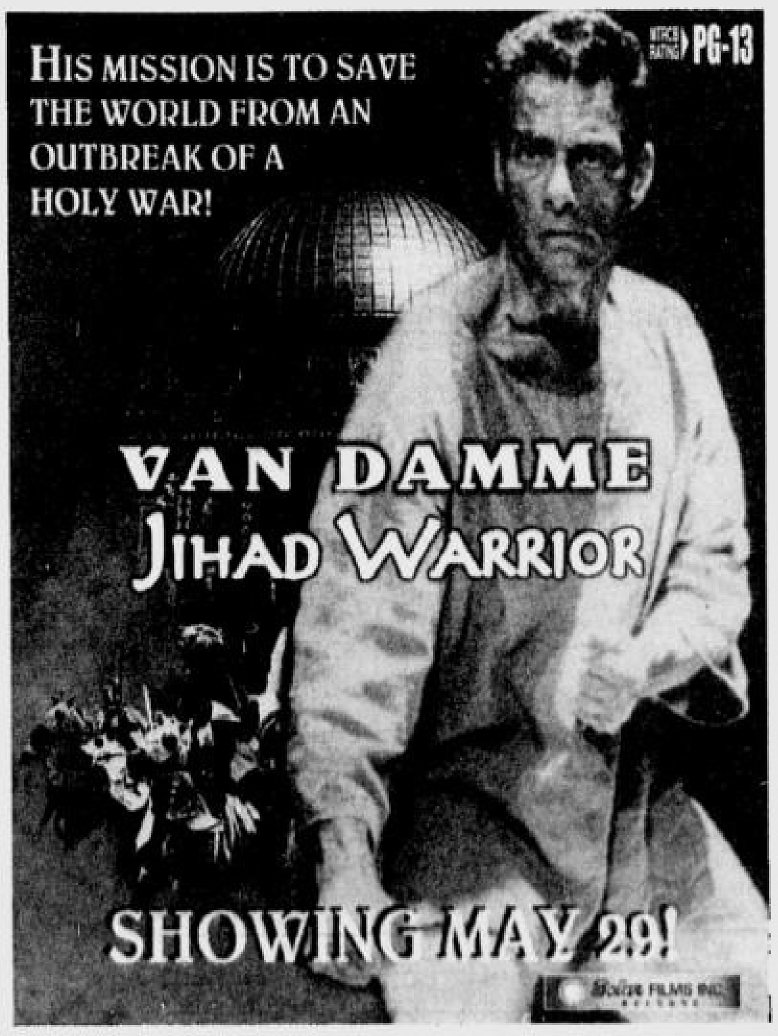

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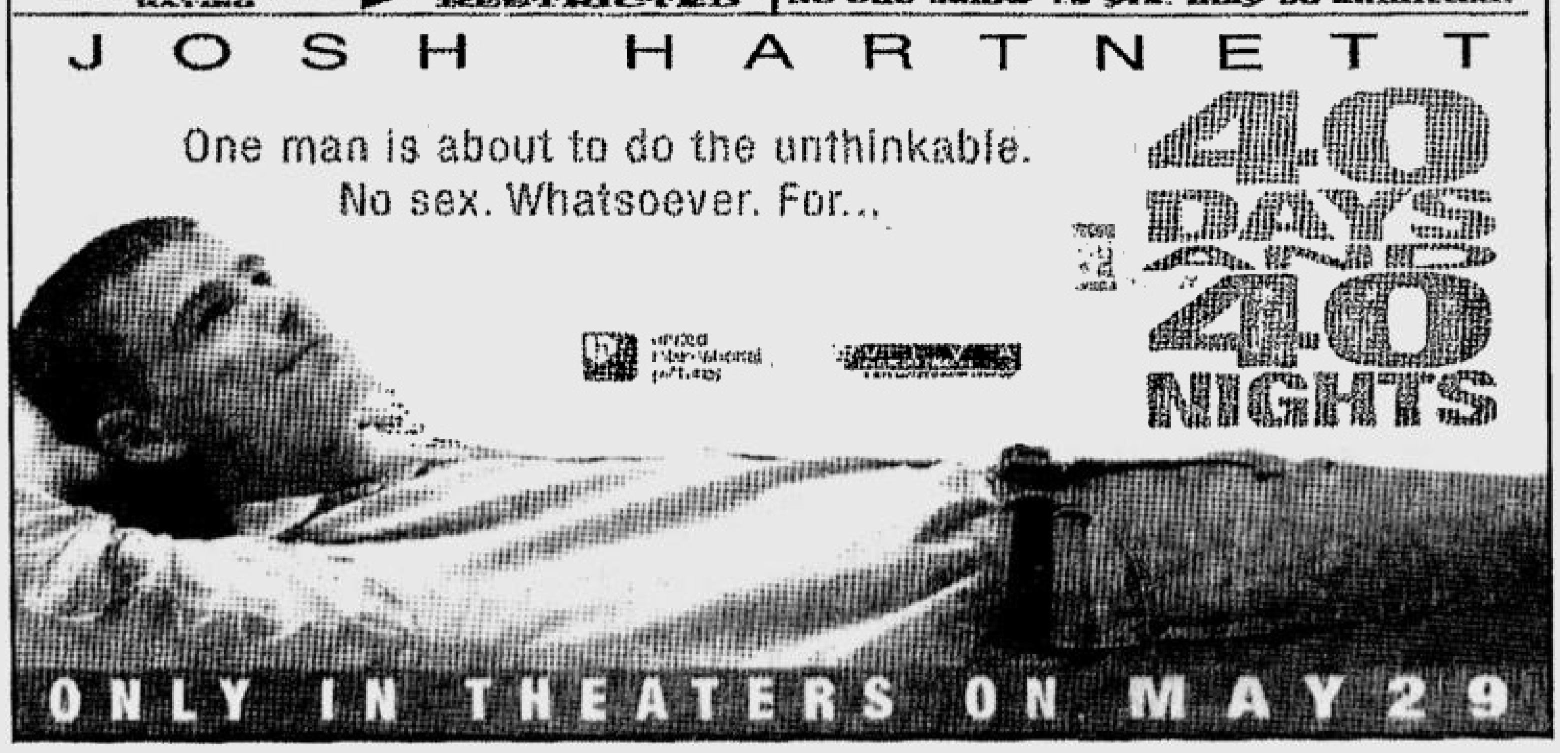


JOSH HARTNETT
One man is about to do the unthinkable.
No sex. Whatsoever. For...
40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS
ONLY IN THEATERS ON MAY 29

Piolo bleeds for a cause

From page 32

Trainers must be between 18 and 25. They are required to attend a 21-day seminar on the prevention of drug abuse, AIDS, violence and terrorism.

"Trainers must also be articulate since they will be asked to help in RCY-sponsored campaigns in schools and barangays," Orilla explained.

Piolo vows to remain an active Red Cross member even after his stint as RCY model.

"I just want to help," he said. "If they need me, I'll still be here."

Nice Joyce

The actor is also busy promoting his new movie from Regal Films, "I Think I'm in Love," where he is paired with sex siren Joyce Jimenez. The romance is directed by Maryo J. de los Reyes and will be shown during the Manila Film Festival in June.

"I think the atmosphere on the set helped us become more comfortable because she was never a prima donna," Piolo said of working for almost four months with Joyce. "She's a very nice person."

Also in "I Think I'm in Love" are Gloria Romero, Luis Gonzales, Roselle Nava, Michelle Bayle, Nancy Castiglione, Jam Melendez and Cholo Escaño.

Kid TV . . .

From page 32

emoniously dumped by his network's bosses after a payola scandal: He was caught by the FBI taking bribes from stage-struck parents eager to see their tykes on his show.

Desperate to find a replacement for the fallen Randolph's vacant time slot, corrupt network president Frank Stokes (Jon Stewart) and his senior programming executive Nora Wells (Catherine Keener) track down a guy named Sheldon Mopes, an impossibly earnest song-and-dance man who dresses as a puffy, fuchsia rhinoceros when working his gigs at children's hospitals and rehab clinics.

Dangerous world

Mopes likes the idea of going into mainstream TV where his change-the-world-platform (actually his motto is "You can't change the world but you can make a dent") can really influence people. But when the Smoochy show becomes a big hit he finds out that the world of children's TV is far from being wholesome and idealistic, that it's a dangerous world steeped in corruption, back-stabbing and violence.

Soon Mopes has to contend with crooked charities, merchandising hungry executives and worst of all, a down and out Randolph Smiley plotting revenge. The resulting mayhem is kind of like having Barney in the "Twilight Zone."

There's a lot of sinister fun in this extremely dark, satirical plot but like I said, it's not for everyone. Perhaps the best thing about the film is the reversal of role assignments for Williams and Norton.

After a string of warm and fuzzy roles going all the way back to "Dead Poets Society," Williams once again gets to do his once-trademark manic performances (his last one being the voice and inspiration behind the genie of the lamp in Walt Disney's "Aladdin").

On jet fuel

In "Smoochy," Williams seems to be spitting bile on jet fuel. The screenplay written by former "Late Night with David Letterman" writer Adam Resnick gives him plenty of sketch comedy-type pieces and dialogue where he can flourish and flash Randolph's malevolent character.

Randolph is not just the jealous, dethroned king of kid TV. He believes "the foam rubber carpetbagger (that's what he calls Mopes) is the face of evil sent by the devil" to destroy him. Thus, he does everything he can to wipe Smoochy off the face of the earth. Death to Smoochy, indeed.

Meanwhile, we find Norton, who has made a name in the film business giving life to dark, brooding characters (recall "American History X" and "Fight Club"), this time playing someone straight as an arrow. To his credit, Resnick doesn't relegate Sheldon Mopes to the stereotypical lone innocent role. Naïve and compassionate Mopes may be, but he's also very proactive—sometimes irritatingly so—when pushing for his social agenda, as when he battles network executives who are mainly interested in selling Smoochy spin-off products.

In one scene, Norton, whose wholesome looks make him an ideal children's TV icon, asks the jaded Nora if she sees children or "little wallets with pigtails" after he finds out about plans of cashing in on Smoochy's success by selling Smoochy cereals, cola, string cheese and what have you.

Madness

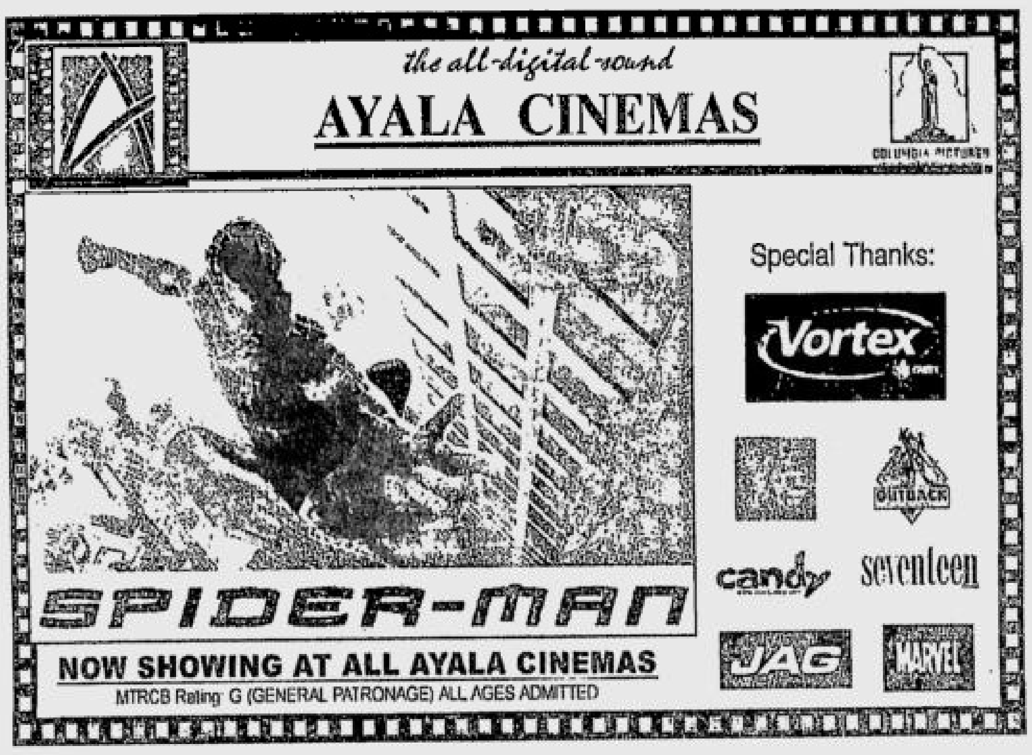
There's a generously piling of twists, turns and reversals in the plot. Some are interesting, others diverting. I found myself laughing hardest at the musical numbers, impressively filmed (by cinematographer Anastas Michos who worked on "Man on the Moon") with psychedelic colors, grand-scale set pieces and a generous dose of razzle-dazzle madness.

Funny also are the songs co-written by Norton and Resnick and set to tunes by composer David Newman; they have lyrics that are just as satirical as everything else in the film.

Norton sang an anti-heroin version of "She'll be Coming Round the Mountain" for recovering addicts and a children's song whose chorus is "My stepdad's not mean, he's just adjusting."

Williams opens the Randolph show with an amphetamine-driven, campy anthem of "Friends Come in All Sizes" complete with midgets as back-up performers.

Kid TV will probably never be like what we see in "Smoochy." But then again, you have to wonder.



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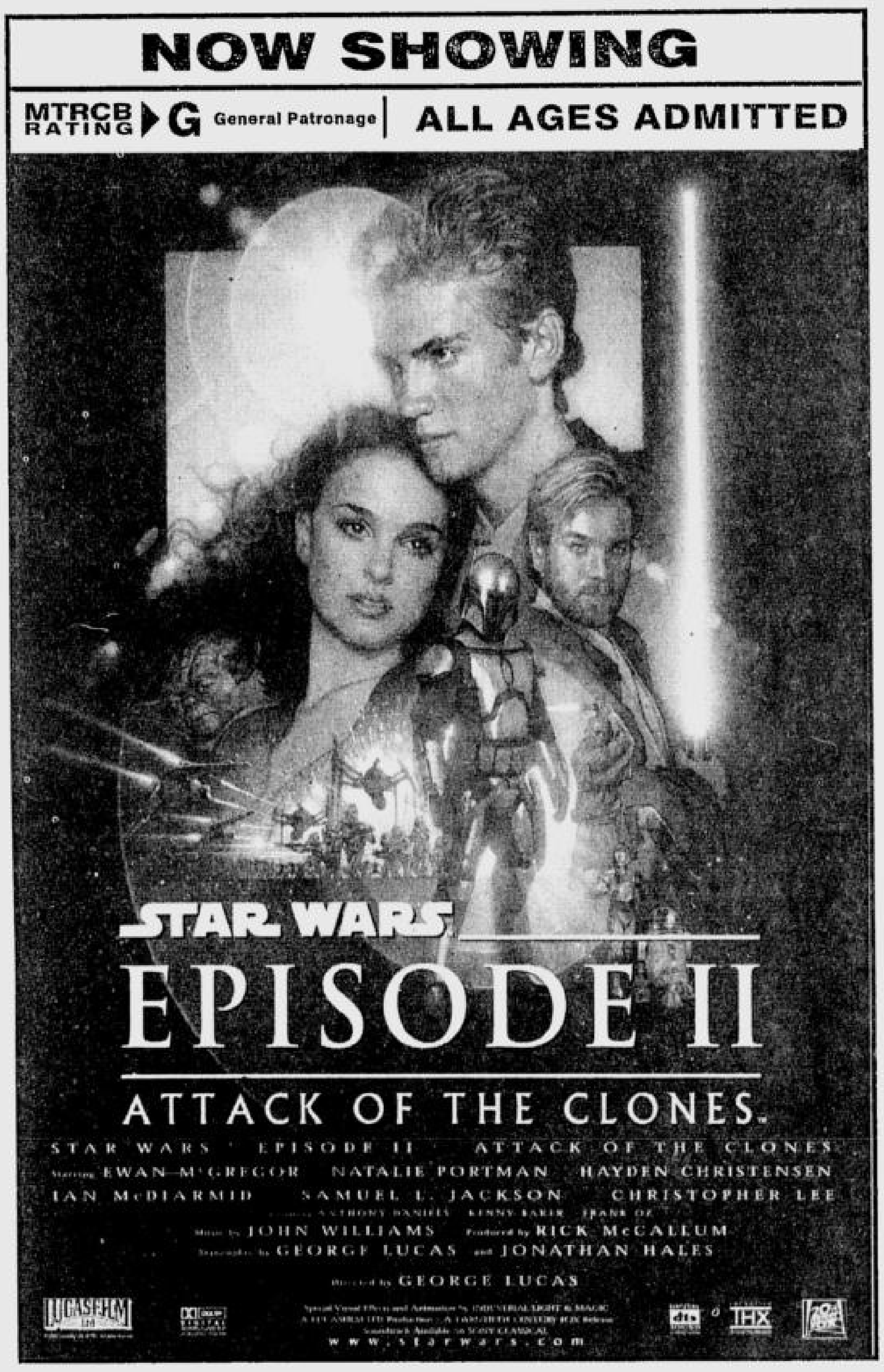

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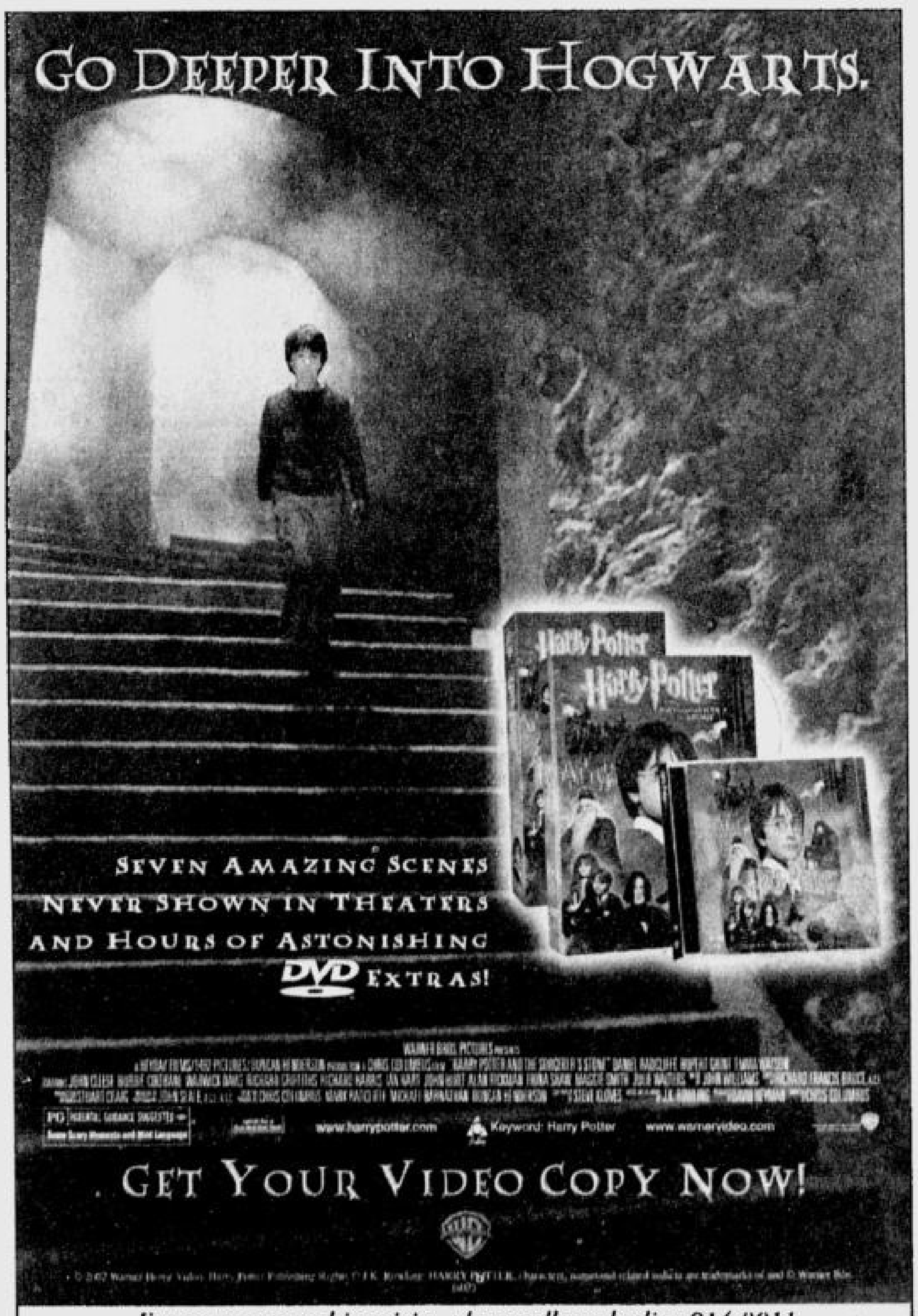

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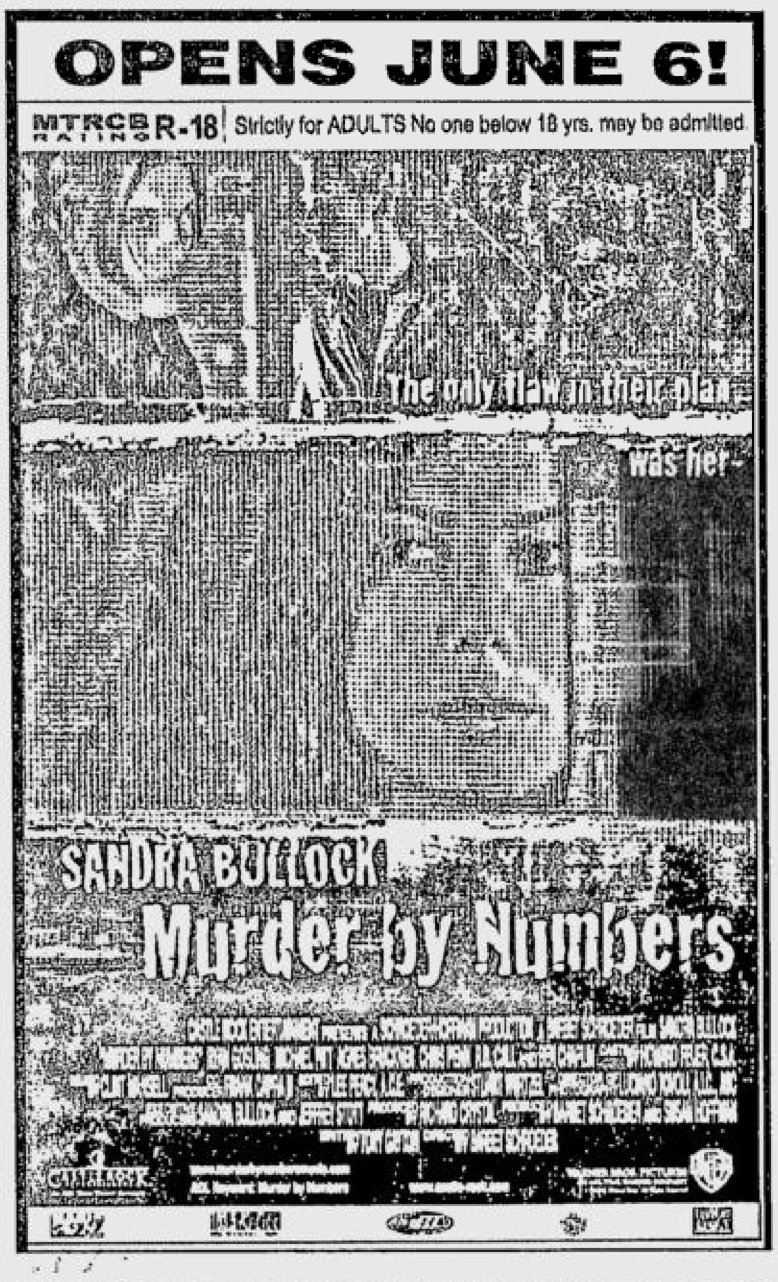

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SANDRA BULLOCK
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SPIDERMAN - GP 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10	IN THE BEDROOM-R18 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00	STAR WARS - GP 1:25, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
STAR WARS - GP 11:20, 2:10, 5:00, 7:50, 10:40	DEATH TO SMOOCHY-P13 1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:20	STAR WARS - GP 12:10, 3:00, 5:50, 8:40, 11:30

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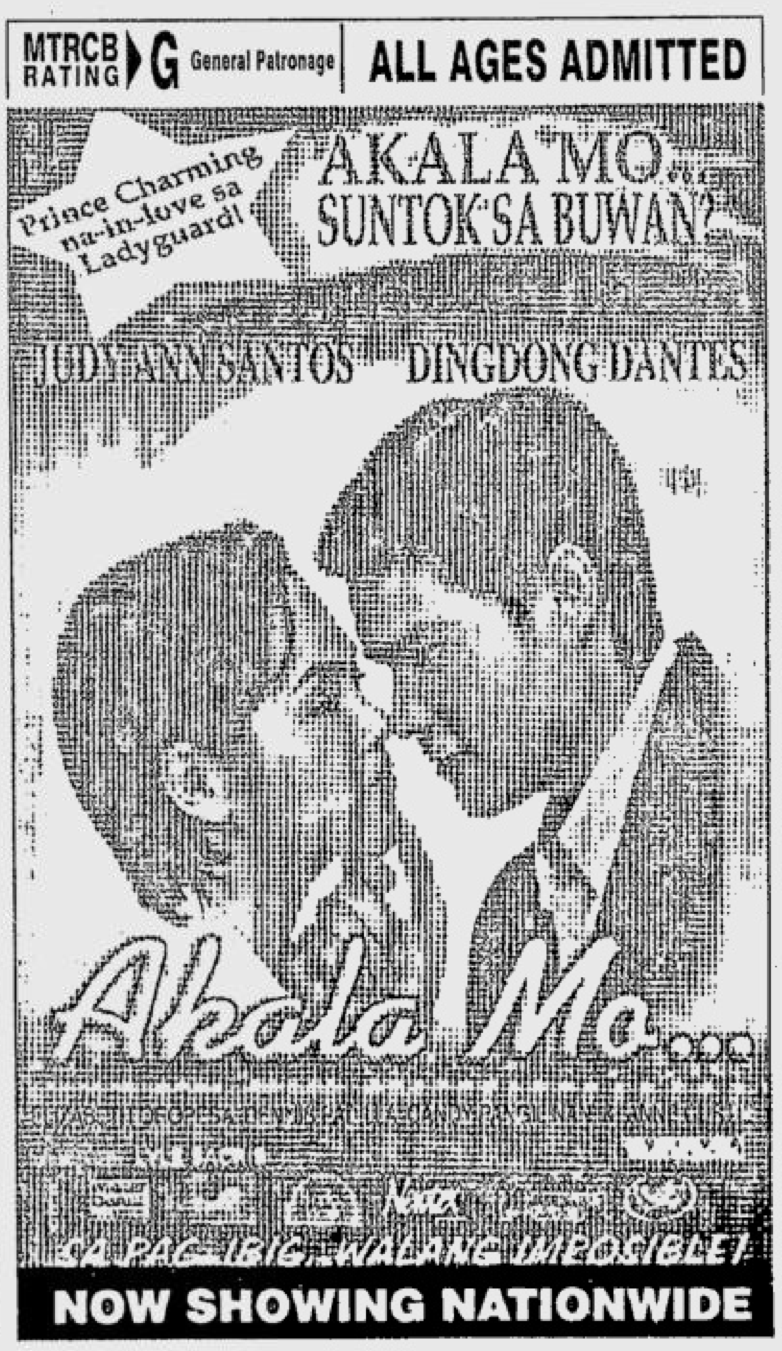

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Prince Charming na-in-love sa Ladyguard!
AKALA MO... SUNTOK SA BUWAN?
JUDY ANN SANTOS DINGDONG DANTES
Akala Mo...
SA PAG-IBIG...WALANG IMPOSIBLE!
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Technical virtuosity and pure genius

By Paul Daza

REVIEW

YOU'VE waited three years for it, so let's cut to the chase. "Star Wars Episode 2: Attack Of The Clones" is a huge improvement over "Star Wars Episode 1," and it's nearly as great as my all-time favorite "Star Wars" movie, "The Empire Strikes Back."

Packed with spectacular visual delights, an intriguing, doomed romance, and a splendid music score, "Attack of the Clones" will have fans applauding with approval and paying for repeated viewings.

What makes "Attack Of The Clones" work like a dream is that unlike "The Phantom Menace," this new installment is aimed at an older, more mature audience which doesn't believe in the cliché "And they lived happily ever after."

"Clones" reminds me of the famous description of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony: Fate knocking at the door. The specter of tragedy hangs throughout "Episode 2," because these prequels are all leading up to the first "Star Wars" movie, where the villains, led by Anakin Skywalker/Darth Vader, have the upper hand. We all know what's going to happen. The fun of the "Star Wars" movies is finding out how, why and when.

The best parts of "Episode 2" are those moments which will resonate in "future" installments: Obi Wan Kenobi telling his ambitious apprentice Anakin Skywalker, "Why do I have the feeling you'll be the death of me?" and other scenes where the groundwork is slowly but efficiently being laid for the moment when Anakin will eventually be seduced totally by the Dark Side of The Force.

10 years after

"Episode 2" picks up 10 years after the events depicted in "The Phantom Menace," and Padmé Amidala is no longer Queen of Naboo, but a senator in the Galactic Republic. The movie begins with an attempt on her life, and the ensuing investigation unearths a complex plot involving separatists and a vast army of clones.

Padmé's friends, Anakin and Obi Wan Kenobi, are assigned to protect her and capture the would-be assassin, but the Jedi and his apprentice are blocked at every turn by sinister forces. By the time the staggering scale of the conspiracy is unearthed, hundreds of lives will have been lost.

Because this is a George Lucas production, you can expect the technical virtuosity alone to be worth the price of a movie ticket. Some sets evoke the grungy neon look popularized in Ridley Scott's "Blade Runner," while others recall the antiseptic, washed-out look of the Stanley Kubrick sci-fi classic, "2001: A Space Odyssey."

My favorite place in the film is the lyrical, European lakeside retreat where Anakin and Padmé enjoy each other's company. Lucas should actually build it on a theme park and charge lovers a hefty fee to use it.

Shrewd strategy

And what's a Star Wars movie without a war? The climactic, near-apocalyptic battle scene involving hundreds of thousands of humans, aliens, and robots coming at each other in a desert canyon is light-years more complicated than the war that brought "The Phantom Menace" to an end.

Lucas has a very shrewd strategy as a filmmaker: He gives the viewer so much to absorb that you walk away from the "Star Wars" movies certain that you didn't see everything you were supposed to. After our "Episode 2" preview ended, a friend asked me if I saw Anthony Daniels, the actor who plays C3PO, in a brief appearance in a bar scene sans costume. I had to admit that I missed this cameo.

What do you do to remove that nagging feeling that you missed something? You watch the movie again days later, then buy the DVD or videotape months later, spending the next three years examining every frame until the next movie comes out.

But the special effects aren't the only selling point of "Episode 2." Lucas wisely exploited the romantic aspects of "Attack of the Clones" as well. He already knew that men and boys would watch his movie no matter what, so it wouldn't hurt to throw in something for the ladies. Hence, the many scenes where Anakin and Amidala are gazing into each other's eyes in front of the most beautiful backdrops you've seen in the movies, as John Williams' evocative love themes underscore their feelings for each other.

AS PADMÉ Amidala, the beautiful Natalie Portman also rises to the varied demands of "Attack of the Clones."

Lucas also isn't above giving girls a matinee idol they can swoon for. In the actor who plays Anakin Skywalker, Canadian newcomer Hayden Christensen, Lucas has created the Star Wars series' first hunk (for lack of a better word). He certainly looks like a movie star, but can he act?

In "Episode 2," his first major role, Christensen turns in an uneven performance. He's arresting and frightening in the scene where he tells Amidala about a group of creatures he has slaughtered like animals. But in a scene where he's mourning the loss of a loved one, he doesn't quite scale the emotional heights the scene seems to warrant.

Veterans

The veterans in the cast turn in more consistent work. As Obi Wan Kenobi, Ewan McGregor is all but unrecognizable from the singing, wide-eyed innocent he played in "Moulin Rouge." His irritation at Anakin's arrogance is the source of many of the film's lighter moments.

As Jedi Master Mace Windu, Samuel L. Jackson is given a lot more to do here than in "Episode 1," where all he did was stroke his chin. Jackson plays a pivotal role in the climax of "Episode 2," a scene which will have Star Wars scholars buzzing for years to come.

As Padmé Amidala, the beautiful Natalie Portman also rises to the varied demands of "Attack of the Clones," particularly in the arena of romance. Portman is a lovely, regal presence, the heir apparent to Audrey Hepburn. Her scenes with Christensen are for me the most affecting and engaging parts of "Episode 2."

As the mysterious Count Dooku, Christopher Lee is also unforgettable. Was it intentional that this character's name read like a very slight variation on "Count Dracula," the role which Lee is most famous for? At any rate, Lee's effortless, classy villainy adds immeasurably to the treasure trove that is "Attack of the Clones."

Stirring score

Other things to celebrate are a very agile, computer-generated Yoda that does things in this movie which even the gifted puppeteer Frank Oz could only make happen in his dreams, and the significant shortening of the screen time given to Jarjar Binks.

Next to Lucas, the most significant contributor to the Star Wars movies has to be composer John Williams, and his score for "Episode.2" is pure, unadulterated genius.

Even though the images which Lucas and his team of visual effects artists have lovingly created are flawless for the most part (they are less convincing when they try to simulate human beings), they still rely on Williams' powerful, stirring score to work.

In the scenes where Anakin is slowly giving in to his anger and hatred, it is Williams' music that made my skin crawl.

Astounding

"Episode 2" also makes history by being the first movie to be shot entirely using digital videotape, as opposed to tried-and-tested film. The reason Lucas did this is because most of the manipulation he does to the Star Wars movies takes place on the digital level, and film is very difficult to handle and easy to damage.

Shooting and mastering the movie on the digital level then transferring it to film for exhibition saves one step in the degradation of the image. Theoretically, this should result in a clearer image than what we are used to.

Lucas' experiment was successful for the most part. Its flaws became evident only in one shot, the part where Anakin and Padmé are having a romantic interlude in a meadow in Naboo. If you look carefully at the first shot of the scene, you'll notice that the grass stems are grainier than the rest of the picture, a sign that the digital videotape has difficulty capturing the detail you see in millions of blades of grass.

But let's give credit where credit is due: The image quality of the rest of the movie is astounding. "Star Wars Episode 2: Attack of the Clones" sets a new standard in motion picture clarity, and makes it obvious why we love the movies.

THE MASCOTS BAND. Back to play memorable '60s hits.

Bands rock the city

ON MAY 31 and June 1, the country's premiere business and commercial hub, Makati City, gets rocked to its very core as two rock marathons explode at the Makati Park to mark the city's 332nd foundation day.

To be headlined by Moonstar 88, Cheese, The Youth on May 31 and Asin, Color It Red, The Dawn and Barbie's Cradle the next night, the open-air musical extravaganzas are the Makati City government's way of saluting a hearty "Mabuhay Makati 332."

But the culminating concerts are just the tip of a long line of treats and revelries. Makati City sets the benchmark for any foundation day celebration by actually opening the festivities eight days before the actual date.

Tonight is the coronation of Miss Makati 2002 at the Mandarin Hotel, while the Makati 332 Raffle promo starts in all commercial establishments and dining places.

May 31 takes the celebration to overdrive. There's a puppet show at the City Hall Quadrangle, a midnight madness sale at Ayala Center and food festival at Paseo de Roxas.

This will be highlighted by a grand parade along Ayala Avenue in the afternoon, where Makati streets are made extra colorful by delegates of various associations and floats all over it.

The day will be capped by a fireworks display at Ayala Center at 10 p.m.

Benefit concert

THIRTY-FIVE years ago, a group of high school classmates decided to form a band. Driven by their passion for music, they performed a wide range of '60s tunes. Today, the frizzled, mopped-top, guitar-totting boys have all grown up and have become successful business executives in their own fields. However, their passion for music lives on.

After more than three decades, the band they had formed, The Mascots Band, is back to play memorable '60s hits in a special show, May 25 at Downtown in Rembrandt Hotel. The concert is a benefit for the Mother of Souls Apostolate.

The Mascots Band is headed by Manny Tan, bassist, and the one who gave the band its distinctive name. Other members are Ramon Lim, drummer and vice president for marketing of Asia Pacific Timber; Ruben Tan, lead guitarist and Gold Power Electric Corp. president; Edgardo Quiros, second lead guitarist and plant manager of Winlex Marketing Corp.; Antonio R. Mateo, keyboardist and a surgeon at the Mateo Family Clinic; and Peter Ching, rhythm guitarist and general manager of Sanchi Marketing Corp.

On vocals are Frederick L. Soon, a sales executive at Justino Corp. and the band's resident arranger; Esther Amedo-Soon; Gregorio Cobankiat, president of Justino Corp; Ulysses R. Issac, BPI Family Bank senior manager; and Arsenio A. Averilla branch human resource manager of Matimco Incorporated.

Slapshock gigs

NU 107's best band of the year and listener's choice awardee, the hard-hitting rap metal band Slapshock, is set to rock Batangas and Lucena City.

The high-voltage gig takes place May 26, 7 p.m. at the Batangas City People's Quadrangle and another one on Tuesday, May 28, 7 p.m. at Perk's Bar in Lucena City. The Lucena gig coincides with the town fiesta.

The event is mounted by Guru Productions and presented by Alcatel OT-511, with Dickies Jeans USA and Red Horse Beer. The show will be directed by Guru's president, Tweet Alturas.

Film industry members optimistic about movie bill

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

MEMBERS of the local film industry have reason to rejoice. After years of lobbying, the Senate and House of Representatives recently passed on third reading a bill creating the Film Development Council of the Philippines, an umbrella organization tasked, among other functions, to provide tax incentives to producers of outstanding Filipino films.

Last May 16, after a bicameral conference between representatives from the Senate and the House, it was decided that the final version of the bill will be submitted to the Senate President and House Speaker for their signatures.

The final step is the signature of President **Macapagal-Arroyo**, after which it becomes a law following its publication in the official gazette for 15 days.

Producer **Marichu Vera-Perez Maceda** notes the bill is the culmination of a legislative struggle that has taken years.

"The granting of tax incentives to quality films was patterned after the Swedish and Finish film industries," Maceda informs.

Maceda thanks Sen. **Tito Sotto III** for passing on the Senate bill creating the Film Development Council. "He has been a very good captain ball who came across with his promise and kept true to his word," Maceda says of Sotto.

She also cites Ilocos Norte Rep. **Imee Marcos Manotoc** for her unrelenting support to the bill.

Sen. **Loren Legarda** was one of the authors of the bill who later referred it to Sotto, the chair of the Senate public information committee.

"The biggest problem of the industry is over taxation," Maceda points out. "Since the time of my *lolo* (Dr. **Jose Vera-Perez**), the industry had been making an effort to be relieved from taxes."

Maceda also credits the support of Senators **Loi Ejercito, Manny Villar, Franklin Drilon** and **Nene Pimentel**, as well as Representatives **Ralph Recto, Gerry Espina, Butz Aquino** and **Neptali Gonzales Jr.**

Maceda adds the industry is grateful to Rep. **Nonoy Andaya**, chair of the House appropriations committee, who approved the P20-million budget to organize the Film Development Council.

Other sectors however, have criticized the bill for not including the censorship provision. But director **Laurice Guillen**, president of the foundation and principal proponent of the bill, explains that censorship is not quantifiable unlike taxes.

SEN. Tito Sotto presided at the recent bicameral conference at Manila Hotel, attended by (from left) film director Laurice Guillen, Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos Manotoc and film producer Marichu Vera-Perez Maceda.

"Fighting for or against censorship will be counter-productive if it will only lead to confusion," Laurice maintains. "In censorship, there is a need for discussion and debate because we're talking about freedom. You have to consider morality, the audience and other control mechanisms."

Regular members of the Film Development Council will include representatives from the filmmakers association, theater owners group and from the academe.

The Cinema Evaluation Board will evaluate and grace films submitted to the Council. The board shall be composed of a chair and 30 members to be appointed by the president.

Maceda said there will be no limitations to the number of films to be awarded with amusement tax rebates. Rated "A" films will be entitled to a 100-percent rebate, while rated "B" films will be given a 65-percent rebate.

Lawyer **Espiridion Laxa**, president of the Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP), points out that the tax rebate will be remitted by the local government units to the Council which in turn will remit it directly to the producers.

Maceda informs that the next thing the Film Development Council will work on is the passage of the anti-piracy bill.

'Star Wars' exhibit

IF YOU watch "Star Wars Episode 2: Attack of the Clones" at Greenbelt, you shouldn't miss the exhibit at the Cinema 3 lobby, featuring the "Star Wars" collection of die-hard fans, including film and TV director **Mark Reyes**, comedians **Ogie Alcasid** and **Michael V.**

The "Star Wars" exhibit boasts of an extensive display of movie and merchandise memorabilia, including action figures, costumes, studio props, toys, scale models, books and comic, promotion materials and even fast food giveaways. It celebrates the legend and recreates the fanfare, magic and majesty of "Star Wars."

Moviegoers will be awed by master replica of light sabers, a full-size Yoda and a life-size Darth Maul.

Mark, who has the most extensive collection among the three celebrities, is a "Star Wars" junkie. To him, "Star Wars" is the stuff today's filmmakers' dreams are made of. His most valued piece is an autographed picture of **Ray Park**, a.k.a. Darth Maul.

Joe Tecson, who designed the Ripley's Museum at the Shangri-La Mall and part of the "Miss Saigon" stage at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, manage the exhibit area.

The display is divided into four unique dioramas equipped with special panels to showcase the fabulous array of memorabilia. One is the Republic spaceship, while the other is the Imperial spaceship. The two other dioramas will bring fans to the world of Naboo and the landscape of Tatooine.

"STAR Wars" junkie: Film and TV director Mark Reyes with his impressive memorabilia.

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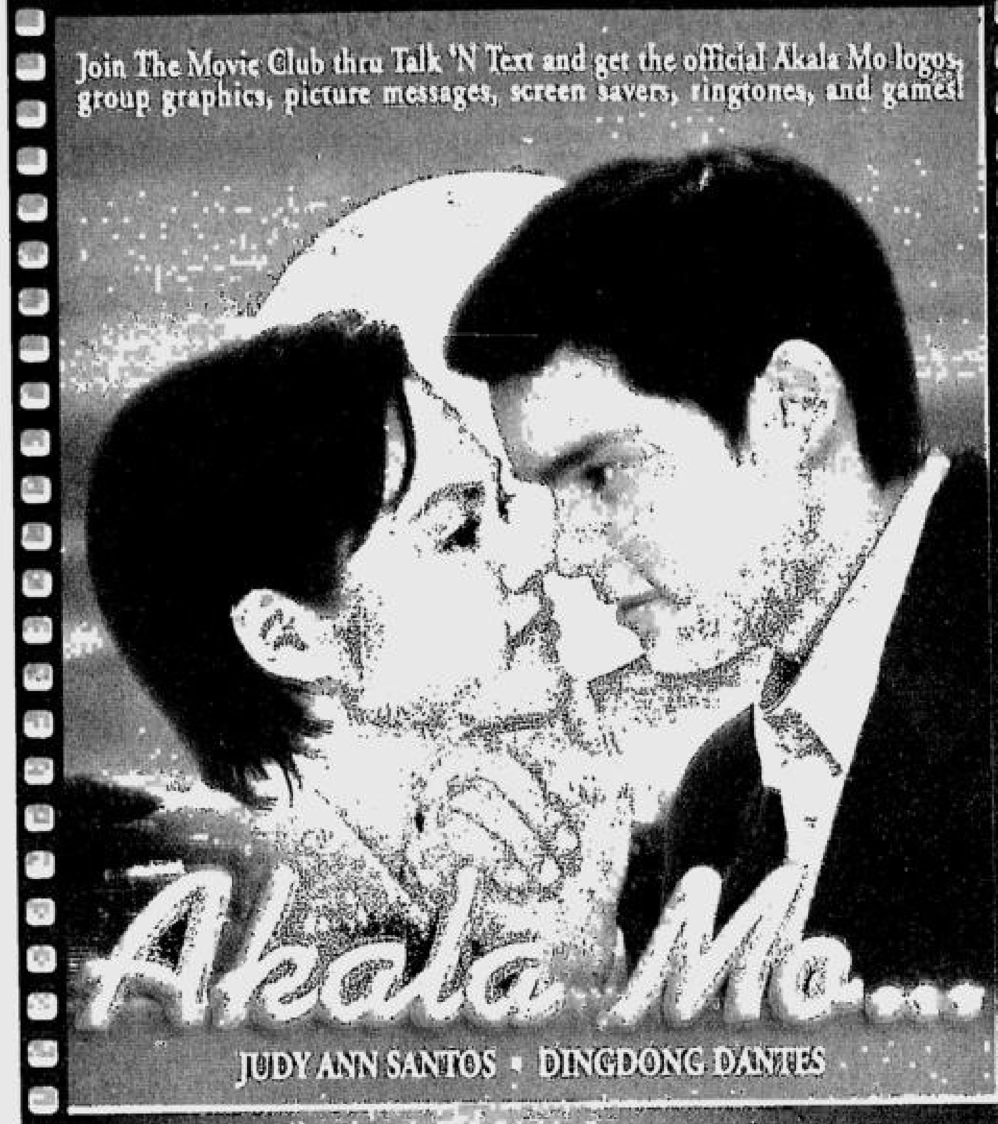
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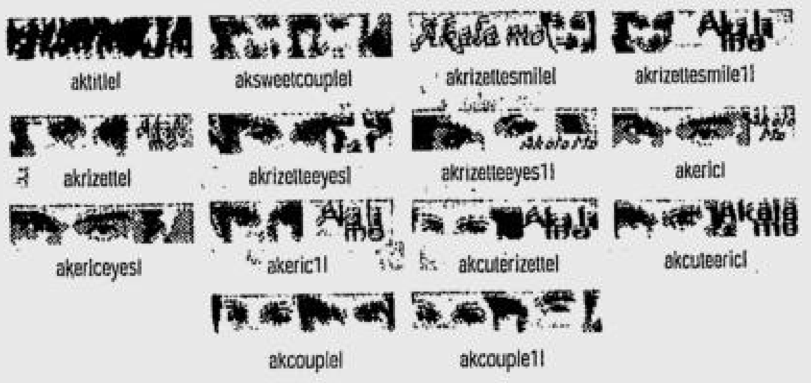

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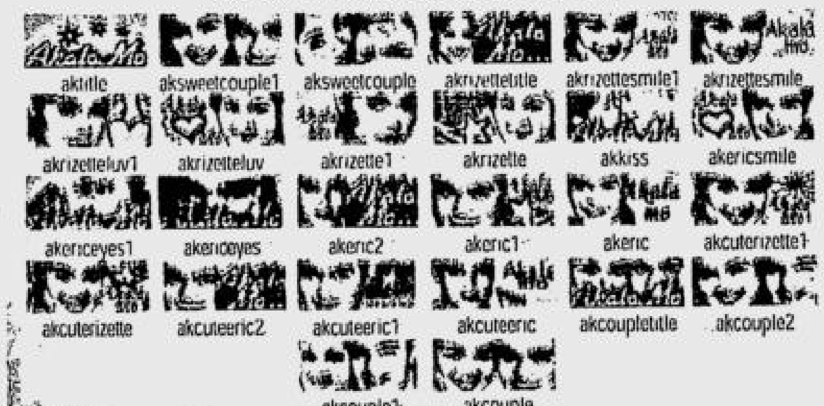

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

Piolo bleeds for a cause

By Marinel R. Cruz

PASCUAL. A fulfilling experience.

WHILE the Ecstasy controversy continues to make the entertainment industry miserable, it is reassuring to see a star like Piolo Pascual involved in a campaign against the use of illegal drugs.

Piolo is the new image model of the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) youth sector. He participates in anti-drug campaigns, fund-raising activities and youth leadership efforts supported by the charitable institution.

He has attended PNRC-sponsored conventions in Rizal, Laguna and Bacolod City. He is also expected to visit PNRC chapters in the cities of Maasin, Ormoc, Iloilo and Baguio, and in the provinces of Cebu, Davao Oriental and Camarines Norte.

When the Inquirer recently talked with Piolo at the product launch of Sara Lee's newest line of men's fragrances, the actor said he has already donated blood through the PNRC Rizal chapter four times. He has also been to the PNRC national headquarters on Roxas Boulevard twice, where he met with young people like him.

"It feels good to donate blood because it cleanses your system," Piolo said. "It's a way of sharing yourself and helping other people. When they asked me to be the Red Cross Youth (RCY) model, I didn't have second thoughts."

18 to 25

"Pledge 25" is an RCY program where young blood donors pledge to donate blood three to four times a year, starting at age 18 until they turn 25. Members are also taught to look for other volunteer donors.

When the late actor Rico Yan turned 25 and ended his stint as Pledge 25 endorser, Piolo took over.

Piolo signed a memorandum of agreement with PNRC officials on March 31, 2001 at Robinson's Galleria at the Ortigas Center. After the signing, he led about 120 RCY members in a bloodletting ceremony. He said donating blood was his "most fulfilling experience" as an RCY member.

"I think they took about a quarter of a bag of blood from me," he said.

He admitted he felt nervous when he first realized how much blood PNRC personnel were to get from him.

"Piolo is a man with firm ideals," RCY department manager Romeo Orilla said. "He has traveled a lot for the Red Cross for free, mostly to disseminate information about the dangers of drug abuse."

Cogie's turn

Orilla said the RCY is considering another young actor, Cogie Domingo, to take over Pledge 25 when Piolo turns 25 this year. For Cogie's female counterpart, he said, the group "is still looking for a female model."

He said the RCY has also been scouting for young trainers "who must share Piolo's passion to help other people in need."

PIOLO/A30

'DEATH TO SMOOCHY'

Kid TV is never like this

By Ruben M. Cruz Jr.
Contributor

REVIEW

A FEW months ago, I read in an issue of Time magazine that Steve Burns, whom most kids and parents simply know as Steve, has quit the highly popular children's TV program "Blues Clues." Upon leaving, he was quoted as saying, "I didn't want to become Crusty the Clown in front of all of America."

"Say it ain't so, Steve!" I remember thinking then, if only because my kids really like seeing the guy with Blue, that cute, animated dog that is the real star of "Blues Clues."

However, after watching the film "Death to Smoochy," I can't help but conjure up the wildest sub-plots as to why Steve really left the show. In fact, after watching "Smoochy," I'll probably never look at any children's TV show the same way again.

"Smoochy" is for those who don't always want their entertainment served family-style. I noticed there were several children during the sparsely attended screening of the film in a Robinson's Galleria cinema. I wonder if those kids knew what hit them?

Although the film's premise is set in the world of children's TV, "Smoochy," with its mounting violence, expletive-prone characters and unrepentant maliciousness, probably has children as its least intended demographic.

Wild, vulgar

Not to say that "Smoochy" isn't funny, because it is sometimes funny in a wild, cartoonish and vulgar kind of way. At other times it's just wild, cartoonish and vulgar. The genre is called black comedy—something "Smoochy" director Danny De Vito definitely has shown a flair for making in films like "Throw Momma from the Train" and "War of the Roses."

De Vito also acts in the film with its stars, Robin Williams and Edward Norton. The combination of these three actors is enough to generate interest in any film, and for that matter, raise expectations. How far they meet them in "Smoochy" all depends on one's taste.

Personally, I feel there was a little more emphasis on the black part than the comedy. Still De Vito, Norton and Williams acquit themselves well with the given material.

Williams plays Rainbow Randolph Smiley, the host of the highest rated kid's show on TV until he gets uncer-

KID/A30

'Twin' tandem

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"OK, Fine. Whatever," the new Channel 2 sitcom topbilling **Aga Muhlach** and **Bayani Agbayani**, has made its bid for viewers' patronage. In the new comedy series, Aga and Bayani turn out to be twins, despite the great disparity in their looks.

They were separated when they were babies when their parents split up, with their dad and mom each left with one of the twins. Aga grew up in the city, while Bayani stayed in the province, where he helped his grandmother (**Gloria Romero**) run a small gas station.

As fate would have it, Aga and Bayani were finally reunited, and the big comic twist during this reunion is the fact that it was Bayani who complained about Aga's lack of good looks, instead of the other way around.

Ok, fine, but this upside-down joke kept getting repeated, until it ceased to be funny. Thankfully, Aga and Gloria were on hand to keep some of the first episode's situations genuinely amusing, without having to strain, twitch and mug, as Bayani, **Rica Peralejo** and other regulars felt they had to do, to keep the proceedings "lively."

Other ploys included getting a number of sexy girls to strut their stuff, and some supporting comics to clown it up. Some successful comic gambits include "teapot tempest" of the two grandmothers, and Bayani's feeling miffed after Aga has taken over his territory, thus prompting him to keep threatening to leave for good.

But these come too few and far between to keep the show consistently diverting, hence the cast's strained and straining performances. A stronger and more eventful script would go a long way in making the actors' performances more relaxed, and not quite so hard-sell.

Both Aga and Bayani have a lot riding on the outcome of this sitcom, so we hope that it relaxes and gets its act together in the next few weeks.

'Help! I'm a Fish!'

THAT unusual film title says it all: The new animated feature by **Stefan Fjeldmark** is an underwater adventure in which three kids become sea creatures.

Out on a fishing trip, they inexplicably find themselves in cranky Professor McKrill's sinister laboratory. He's working on a potion that will make it possible for humans to live underwater. He's rushing his experiments because he thinks the planet's continents will soon by submerged by a huge flood.

Accidentally, the kids drink the potion and turn into sea creatures. At first, they have the time of their lives, but a cunning fish named Joe gets his hands on the antidote for the potion, and discovers that it can do the opposite: turn fish into humans. The children have to prevent him from carrying out his plan.

As for their own predicament, they have to drink the antidote within 48 hours, or else they will become sea creatures, for keeps.

"Help! I'm a Fish!" features the voices of **Alan Rickman** and **Tabitha St. Germaine**.

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Banks warned on high credit card rates

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has warned banks and credit card issuers to start reducing their charges to clients or it may have to push the Bankers Association of the Philippines to impose a cap on their rates similar to the existing ceiling on lending charges.

The central bank yesterday said it was also studying the rates being imposed by banks on their automated teller machine (ATM) transactions and if these were found excessive, the BSP would have to intervene and impose some measures.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the central bank would like to steer clear from tightening the regulations on areas that were already liberalized in the past like the credit card sector as well as the ATMs.

"But we have been receiving a lot of complaints particularly on credit card charges and if the trend continues, we have to do something. For now, the BSP has decided to simply use its moral suasion as a regulator," Reyes said.

Credit card companies charge about 3.25 percent a month or about 40 percent a year. Most ATM machines charge between P5 and P10 for every interbank withdrawal.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura has already met with officials of the banks and credit card companies to ask them to review their charges particularly now that interest rates are at historic lows.

Reyes said the central bank could push the BAP, the umbrella organization of more than 40 commercial banks, to implement a gentleman's agreement that would impose an informal ceiling on credit card charges.

Commercial banks have agreed to limit their lending rates to creditworthy clients to no more than five percentage points over the 91-day treasury bill rate. The benchmark rate had remained low at 4.381 percent but sources said most banks were still charging their borrowers rates higher than 10 percent.

"The board can discuss whether there is a need to talk about caps on credit card charges with the BAP," Reyes said.

The BSP official added that the central bank has started conducting a survey on the ATM charges being imposed by lenders following concerns raised by some legislators that some ATM operators were charging depositors excessively.

Reyes admitted, however, that ATM operators like Bancnet and Megalink were non-bank companies not under the central bank's regulation.

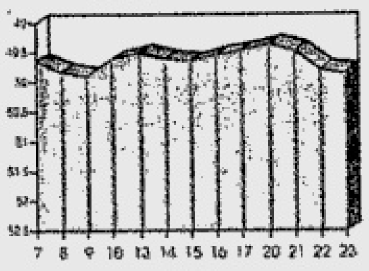
"If the ATM rates are really onerous as some people say, then we would write the banks maintaining ATM machines to ratio-

BANKS/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



MAY

GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱49.84 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 23, 2002

¥124.26 = $1

As of 5 p.m., May 23, 2002

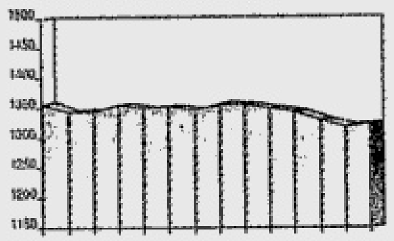
GOLD: $315.50/316

per ounce Hong Kong, May 23, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Shares up, peso weakens

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



MAY

(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES ended marginally higher yesterday, led by gains in blue chip Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended up 4.36 points, or 0.3 percent, at 1,323.94, following Wednesday's 0.7-percent decline. The index had lost 2.8 percent in the past five sessions.

PLDT was among the most active, rising P10, or 2.4 percent, to P420 after a local newspaper reported Thursday that its profitable mobile phone unit, Smart Communications, plans an initial public offering next year. Company officials weren't immediately available to comment.

PLDT recently launched a successful $350-million bond issue, and secured competitively priced loans to fund its expansion and refinance requirements.

Volume on the stock market fell to 295 million shares valued at P284.3 million from Wednesday's 762.1 million shares valued at P720.6 million.

Given the thin value of trades and the lack of foreign interest in the market, Westlink Global Equities research manager Joseph James Lago said he doubts whether Thursday's mild rally can continue.

He added that based on the consensus among investors, Philippine shares remain expensive. This has prompted fund managers to focus on other Asia markets, with Japan drawing the most attention on expectations its economy will finally stage a rebound, he said.

The peso, meanwhile, closed lower yesterday as banks bought dollars to cover short positions, traders said.

The dollar closed at P49.84 on the Philippine Dealing System, down from P49.79 Wednesday.

AP

Gov't pushes price-based tax on AUVs

By Elena R. Torrijos

TOKYO, JAPAN (via PLDT)—The government will push through with the shift to a value-based excise tax on Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) but has assured concerned Japanese car maker Toyota that it would provide an adjustment period before implementing the new scheme.

In a briefing with reporters together with President Macapagal-Arroyo Wednesday evening, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said that even before Toyota executives' meeting with the President, he had already discussed the issue with officials of the car manufacturer.

"I think we have a good understanding of what will be a workable formula. We just need to revise, make some adjustments.

CAMACHO

Our intention is still to have it value-based but providing the industry an adjustment period so they can plan out their production, they can plan out their marketing and finance," Camacho said.

He added that the time frame for the adjustment period would

GOV'T/ B4

RP asks Japan to clear $500-M JBIC guarantee

By Elena R. Torrijos

TOKYO (via PLDT)—The Philippine government has asked Japan's finance ministry to help it secure guarantees from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation for its planned bond issues, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said yesterday.

The Macapagal administration is also asking some Japanese banks to participate in these debt issues.

In a news briefing, Camacho said proceeds of the bond issues that the Philippines wanted JBIC to guarantee might be used to meet the National Power Corp.'s $500-million financing requirements or cover the national government's own needs.

He said he has asked Japanese Vice Finance Minister Haruhiko Kuroda for a favorable decision on state-run JBIC's bond guarantees for Philippine-issued debt instruments.

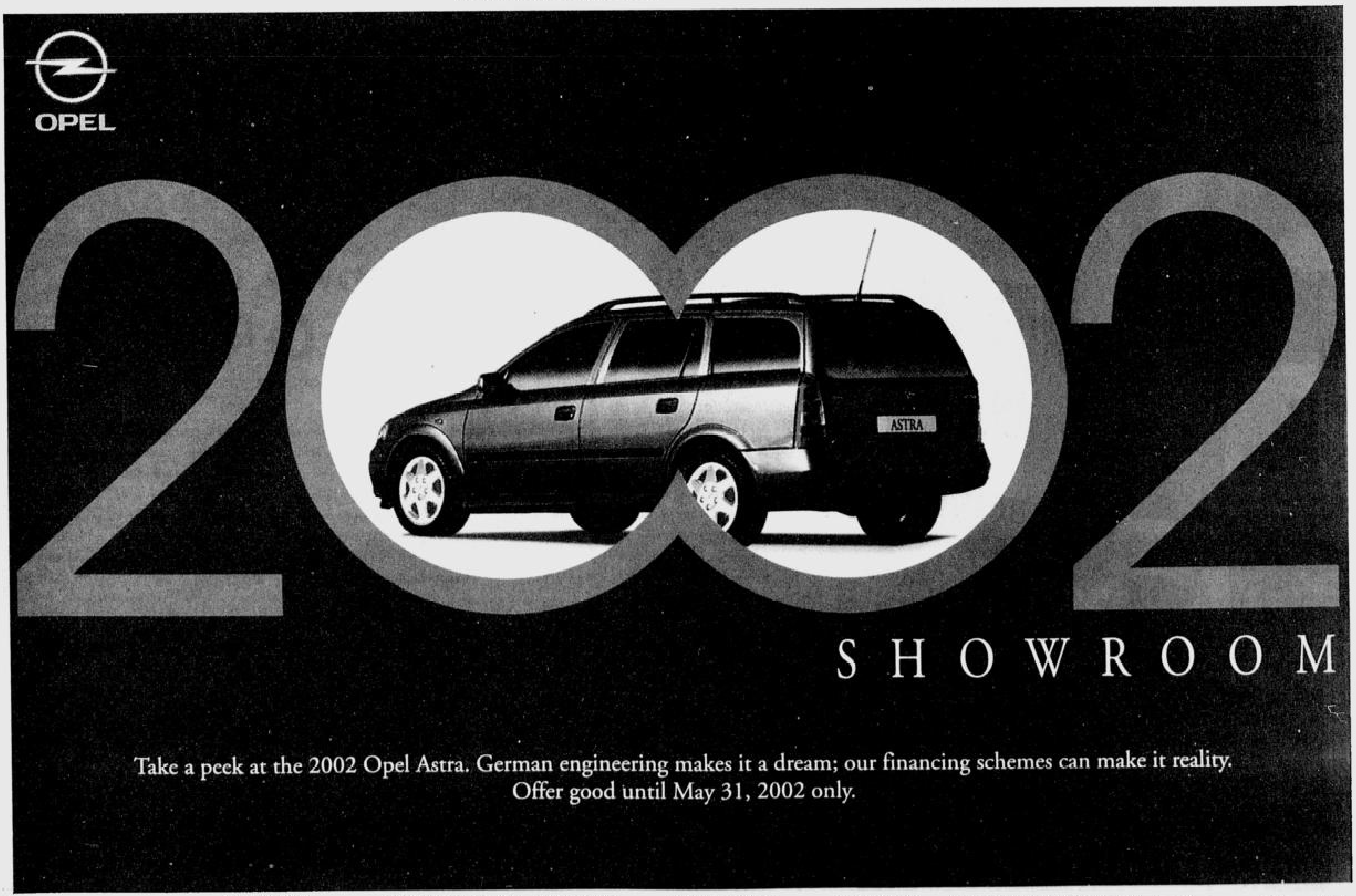
The government has asked JBIC, World Bank and Asian Development Bank to guarantee its bond issues.

The ADB has already agreed to guarantee the principal of the bond and some interest payments.

Camacho, however, explained that JBIC would have to consult with the Japanese finance ministry before it could agree to the guarantee and other issues proposed by the Philippine government.

"I wanted to make sure he (Kuroda) was feeling positive, feeling warm to the ideas, so that when he is consulted he will be more favorable," Camacho said.

"As we said from time to time, we will be tapping the yen markets. I discussed that again to prepare them for some of our future requirements, so that they can start thinking about this. We're also inviting them for the financing of Napocor," Camacho said.



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NAME	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5	5	5	5	1,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	20.5	20.75	20.5	20.75	590,200
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	90	90	90	90	1,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	56	56.5	56	56	769,500
China Banking Corp.	630	630	630	630	2,870
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	37	38	37	37.5	125,600
First E-Bank Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.74	1.74	51,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	40	40	39	40	50,700
Philippine National Bank	40.5	41	40.5	41	8,600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12	12	12	12	5,000
Union Bank Of The Phil.	22.5	22.75	22.5	22.75	14,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.32	1.32	66,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1440	1455	1440	1450	2,080
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1080	1085	1080	1085	9,480
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	5,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.59	490,000
Globe Telecom, Inc.	660	665	660	665	1,890
Ipeople Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	20,000
Piltel	0.32	0.35	0.32	0.35	590,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	412.5	420	410	420	44,760
Philweb.Com, Inc.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	28,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	24.75	24.75	23	24	214,200
Manila Electric Co. B	37	37	36.5	36.5	1,216,100
Petron Corporation	1.78	1.84	1.78	1.84	10,837,000
Salcon Power Corporation	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.66	117,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals, Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	13,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.65	808,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	20,000
Negros Navigation Co.Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.8	0.8	40,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	30,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	120,000
Union Cement Corporation	0.69	0.71	0.69	0.71	400,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.12	2.14	2.12	2.14	47,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.75	323,900
La Tondeña Distillers Inc	34.5	35	34.5	35	312,300
RFM Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	94,000
San Miguel Corp. "A"	48.5	48.5	48.5	48.5	4,200
San Miguel Corp. "B"	56	56.5	55.5	56	77,100
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	1,008,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.34	2.32	2.32	474,000
Ajo.Net Holdings, Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	20,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	130,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	75,000,000
ATN Holdings, Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.85	2.9	62,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.51	0.53	0.51	0.52	2,530,000
Basic Consolidated, Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Crown Equities, Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000
DMCI Holdings, Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	200,000
Ebecom Holdings, Inc.	6	6	6	6	2,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	24	24.25	23.5	24	643,100
Ionics Inc.	7	7	7	7	3,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	1.76	1.76	1.74	1.74	1,204,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. "A"	0.012	0.017	0.01	0.015	7,300,000
Marsteel Cons., Inc. "B"	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	700,000
Medco Holdings	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	20,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.77	0.78	13,290,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	300,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.54	70,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.25	3,580,000
Music Corp.	0.24	0.28	0.24	0.28	40,000
Prime Orion Phils., Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	10,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	270,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.1	0.1	300,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADIN					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	110,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	160,000
Pryce Corp.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	1,000,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	270,000
Fairmont Holdings, Inc.	0.48	0.5	0.48	0.5	140,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	30	30	30	30	105,300
Equitable PCI Bank-War	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	120,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	805	825	805	805	3,480
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
Philweb.Com,Inc -Warrants	0.004	0.0042	0.004	0.0042	16,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.1	7.1	7	7.1	1,233,000
C & P Homes, Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	2,060,000
Cyber Bay Corporation	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.33	1,790,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.24	0.26	0.24	0.26	210,000
Filinvest Land, Inc.	3	3.1	3	3.1	1,033,000
Highlands Prime Leisure	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	60,000
Fil-Estate Land, Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	40,000
SM Prime Holdings, Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.9	4,424,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev.,Inc	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	110,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co., Inc. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	1,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	72,000
Benguet Corp. A	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	160,000
Benguet Corp. B	1.8	2	1.8	2	6,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines, Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.039	0.039	7,800,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.235	0.225	0.23	8,020,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.245	0.25	0.24	0.24	7,580,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	39,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.27	0.32	0.27	0.32	3,670,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.3	0.34	0.3	0.34	10,610,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	12,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	22,000,000
South China Resources Inc	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.24	60,000

CURRENCIES

May 23, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.080030	1.000000	49.4570
Japan	Yen	0.008695	0.008051	0.3982
United Kingdom	Pound	1.575764	1.459000	72.1578
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.138478	0.128217	6.3412
Switzerland	Franc	0.688224	0.637227	31.5153
Canada	Dollar	0.704751	0.652529	32.2721
Singapore	Dollar	0.602696	0.558036	27.5988
Australia	Dollar	0.602359	0.557724	27.5834
Bahrain	Dinar	2.864954	2.652661	131.1927
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.288008	0.266667	13.1885
Brunei	Dollar	0.601855	0.557258	27.5603
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000119	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.025246	0.023375	1.1561
UAE	Dirham	0.294070	0.272279	13.4661
Korea	Won	0.000877	0.000812	0.0402
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.925900	45.7922
Brazil	Real	0.432012	0.400000	19.7828
Denmark	Kroner	0.134307	0.124355	6.1502
India	Rupee	0.022082	0.020446	1.0112
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.284219	0.263158	13.0150
Mexico	New Peso	0.113330	0.104932	5.1896
New Zealand	Dollar	0.510001	0.472210	23.3541
Norway	Kroner	0.133743	0.123833	6.1244
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018030	0.016694	0.8256
South Africa	Rand	0.106934	0.099010	4.8967
Sweden	Kroner	0.109430	0.101321	5.0110
Syria	Pound	0.024714	0.022883	1.1317
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.031543	0.029206	1.4444
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001084	0.001004	0.0497

Chinatrust buys loan portfolio of ABN Amro unit

By Doris C. Dumlao

CHINATRUST (Philippines) Commercial Bank Corp. has signed a deal with European banking giant ABN Amro to buy the latter's personal loan portfolio in the Philippines worth about P330 million as part of a strategy to rapidly expand by acquiring up to P2 billion worth of assets from other institutions.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Chinatrust president Joey Bermudez said the new portfolio acquisition would catapult his bank into a major player in the local personal loan business.

"Several more portfolio acquisitions are being seriously pursued by the bank, including the mortgage and salary loan portfolios of financial institutions and home developers," he said.

ABN Amro Holding NV, for is part, is divesting its consumer banking business in the Philippines through the sale of more than $170 million worth of assets held by local thrift bank unit ABN Amro Savings Bank (AASB).

Last March, AASB sold its mortgage portfolio to BPI Family Savings Bank, the thrift bank unit of Bank of the Philippine Islands, while the Gokongweis' Robinsons Savings Bank took over its branch network and deposit base.

ABN Amro Bank president and vice chair Carmelo Bautista expressed confidence that the sale to Chinatrust of more assets would "ensure uninterrupted servicing and satisfactory handling of the customer relationships that ABN Amro has successfully built over the last several years."

The Philippine unit of ABN Amro diversified from predominantly investment banking operations into consumer banking in September 1999 when it acquired Great Pacific Savings Bank from the Yuchengco group and created AASB. The purchase expanded its franchise in the Philippines to a full-service bank. With the divestment, ABN Amro will revert to its niche in corporate finance and stock brokerage.

DISCLOSURES

CHINATRUST Commercial Bank Corp. acquired from **ABN Amro Bank** the latter's personal loan portfolio in the Philippines.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **South China Resources Inc.** were Edgardo Reyes, Wilfrido Reyes, Belen Castro, Felix Maramba Jr. and Felipe Yap.

* * *

CONCRETE Aggregates Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 21, 8 a.m. at the boardroom of Ortigas and Co. Ltd. Partnership, Ortigas Building, Pasig City. Only stockholders as of May 20 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

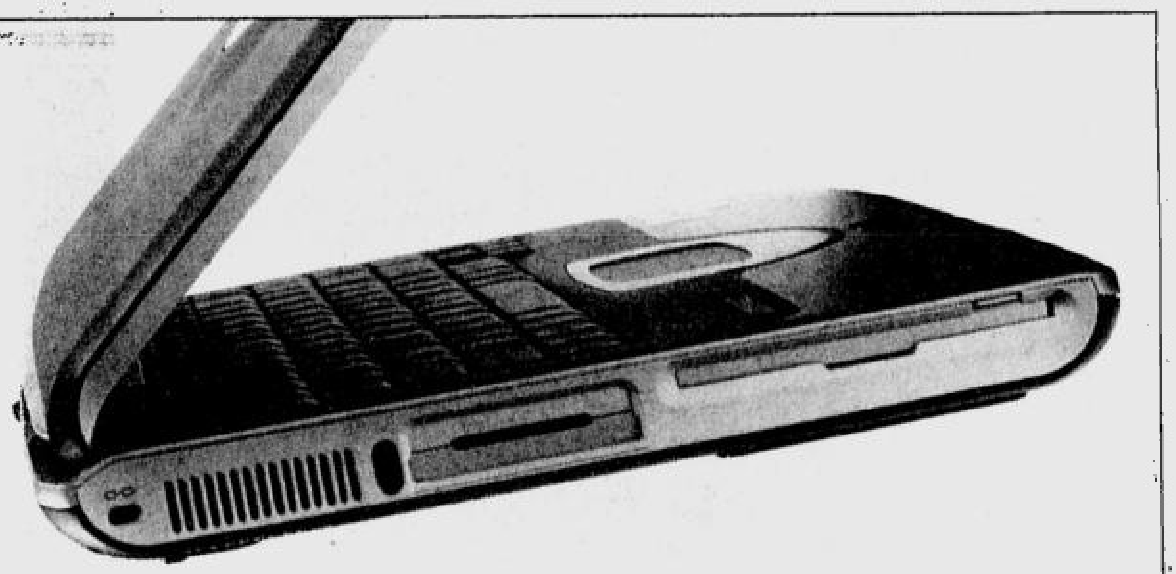
* * *

INTERPHIL Laboratories Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 11, 3 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club, Makati City. Only stockholders as of May 2 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Republic Cement Corp.** were Aloysius Colayco, Leonardo Siguion-Reyna, Aurelio Montinola III, Juan Miguel Montinola, Renato Sunico, Gilbert Sunico, Gilbert Garcia, Romeo Versula, Peter Hoddinott, Jean Dominque Sejourne, Andrew Cunningham and Alfonso Recto.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research



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COMPAQ

Static at Nextel

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

AFTER poor signals and limited coverage now comes another problem, a potential deathblow, for the local Nextel.

The American principals of Nextel Communications, according to the industry grapevine, have decided to pack up their bags and write off their investment here. The Philippine departure is part of the $1-2 billion asset impairment and restructuring costs Nextel International announced in the first quarter.

What is complicating the situation is that the Filipino partners are now squabbling as to who shall take over majority stake of the capital-starved radio-cellular phone provider.

According to the grapevine, the US Nextel has decided to exit via a proposed management buyout of the Philippine operations under a group headed by Mel Velarde, former president of the Lopezes' Sky Cable, and current Nextel Communications president Jose Alejandro.

The US principals of Nextel had at first wanted to merge the local operations here

COCKTALES/ B4

RP, Thailand in $6.4-M barter deal

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PHILIPPINE International Trading Corp. will ship out $6.4 million (P320 million) worth of fertilizer to Thailand to cover for half of the 70,000 metric tons of rice to be imported from Thailand over the next two years.

The deal is part of a counter-trade agreement between the Philippine and the Thai governments signed last year.

Thailand's Department of Foreign Trade beat other foreign government suppliers in a bidding by the National Food Authority for its acquisition of 70,000 metric tons of rice last April.

PITC is currently negotiating with the Leyte-based Philippine Phosphate Fertilizer Corp., currently controlled by the businessman Jose Ch. Alvarez and the Nauru government, for the supply of fertilizer.

The counter-trade program was pitched by the Thai government, which was keen on supplying long grain white rice to the NFA.

The PITC agreement was aimed at further expanding Philippine-Thailand trade relations and pushing the government's policy toward encouraging more barter arrangements to save on foreign exchange resources and boost sales of the country's products.

TRAVEL SAVER TOURS of Causeway Travel

MAY 31 - June 1 & 2, 2002 — GRAND ILOCOS TOUR in Vigan Heritage Village, Marcos Museum, Sta. Monica Church, Malacañang of the North, Paoay Church and Lake, Laoag City, Pagudpud's Ivory Beach and Patapat Bridge. **JUNE 7, 8, 9:** BALER Aurora Province, Rediscovery and ECO-TOUR or Visit CAGAYAN VALLEY's Our Lady of Piat and some century-old Churches in Isabela, Tuguegarao and Iguig. **JUNE 15-16, 2002** is an OVERNIGHT PACKAGE, relaxing in Baguio City with side trips to the Our Lady of Manaoag and Charity and **JUNE 22-23, 2002,** experience DAET's "Pinyasan Festival" featuring performers in pineapple-inspired costumes at the highlight of Street Dancing Parade.

For inquiries and reservations, please call CAUSEWAY TOURS & TRAVEL: Tel. Nos.: 851-7294, 853-8728 or Cell No. 0916-396-3963.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
MAYNILA, PILIPINAS

PREQUALIFICATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites interested general building contractors currently accredited with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for pre-qualification and if later found qualified, to bid for the project described below:

Project Title	Rehabilitation of Existing Sewage Treatment Plant
Scope of Work	Furnishing of all materials, labor, tools, equipment, technical supervision and other services for the complete rehabilitation/improvement of existing sewage treatment plant to include out not limited to civil mechanical, electrical and architectural works all in accordance with the approved drawings, technical specifications, methodologies/facilities and equipment specifications of BSP. Work includes start-up and commissioning of the rehabilitated sewage plant.
Project Location	BSP - Security Plant Complex in East Avenue, Quezon City
Approved Budget	Pesos Five Million Seven Hundred Thirty Five Thousand One Hundred Thirty Two (P5,735.32.00)
Source of Funding	Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Minimum Requirement (Criteria)	
IAC Classification	IAC Category at least Medium (Sewerage and Sewage Treatment Disposal Plant)
Contractor's Construction Experience	Have completed in the past five (5) years at least three (3) construction / rehabilitation of sewage treatment plant projects one of which costs not less than Five Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (5,500,000.00). Must have performed testing, commissioning and operation of sewage treatment plant that passes the effluent quality/ standard of DENR Adm. Order No. 35.
Credit Line/Cash Deposit Certificate Req't	Pesos Five Hundred Seventy Three Thousand Pesos (573,000.00)
Prequalification Statement Forms	
Cost of Forms	Two Hundred Pesos per set (P200.00/set)
Date and Time of Issuance	May 10 to 27, 2002 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Place of Issuance and Submission of Accomplished Prequalification Statement/ Documents	PBAC Secretariat Rm 204 (Tel. No. 524-7011 loc. 3143) 2nd Floor, Five Storey Building BSP Complex A. Mabini corner P. Ocampo (former V. Cruz) Streets, Manila
Deadline of Submission	May 31, 2002 10:00 AM
Notice of Prequalification/Prequalification	
Date and Time of Issuance	June 14, 2002 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Place of Issuance	PBAC Secretariat Rm 204
Bid / Tender Documents	Shall be issued only to prequalified contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents.
Cost of Documents/Place of Issuance	Three Thousand Pesos per set (P3,000.00/set) PBAC Secretariat Rm 204
Date and Time of Issuance	June 17, 2002 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Pre-bid Conference	
Date and Time	June 20, 2002 10:00 AM
Venue	BMD Conference Room / 2nd Floor - Five Storey Building BSP Complex
Submission and Opening of Bids	
Deadline/Venue of Submission	July 01, 2002 / 9:00 am to 10:00 am / PBAC Secretariat Room 204

Date, Time and Venue of Issuance of Bid Documents, Pre-bid Conference and Deadline of Submission/Opening of Bids shall be confirmed in the Notice of Prequalification.

For inquiries, please call PBAC Secretariat - telephone no. 524-7011 local 3143.

Schedule for issuance of notice of prequalification/predisqualification up to deadline of submission of bids may be subject to change.

Guidelines stipulated in the provisions of PD 1594 and its implementing Rules and Regulations, as amended and other applicable rules & regulations shall apply relative to pre-qualification, bidding, evaluation of bids & award of contract.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any contractor/s whose bid/s is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obligated to compensate/indemnify the contractor for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor losses it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) Marcos J. Siongco, Jr.
Chairman

(PDI--May 10, 18 & 24, 2002)

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'Financial system, modern society's important invention' - J.V. Tibayan

By Lulu G. Acosta

In a forum on the financial system obtaining in the country, Jesus V. Tibayan, chairman of the UGC-Tibayan Group of Companies, led his financial analysts and advisers in defining and analyzing the mode of the financial sector of the industry.

He noted that the financial system is the collection of markets, institutions, laws, regulations and techniques through which bonds, stocks and other securities are traded, interest rates determined and financial services produced and delivered around the world.

Acknowledging that the financial system is one of the most important inventions of modern society, Tibayan stressed in layman's terms that its primordial goal is to move scarce loanable funds from those who save to those who borrow to buy goods and services, and to make investments.

"By making funds (credit) available for lending and borrowing, the system provides the means whereby modern economies grow and improve the standard of living of its citizens, because most of the credit go to purchases of machinery and equipment, infrastructure and construction of factories and schools, and the stocking of the shelves of businesses with goods and products."

At the helm of a financial conglomerate which offers asset management (portfolio and investment advisory) and private investment in mutual funds (government securities, equities, capital markets and global fund units), Tibayan heaped praises on the global thrust of the economy.

J.V. TIBAYAN

He stressed that the fate of the financial system of a country has a powerful impact on the health of the global financial scenario.

"When credit becomes more costly and less available, total spending for goods and services falls. As a result, unemployment rises and economy's growth slows down and businesses cut back their production and let workers go."

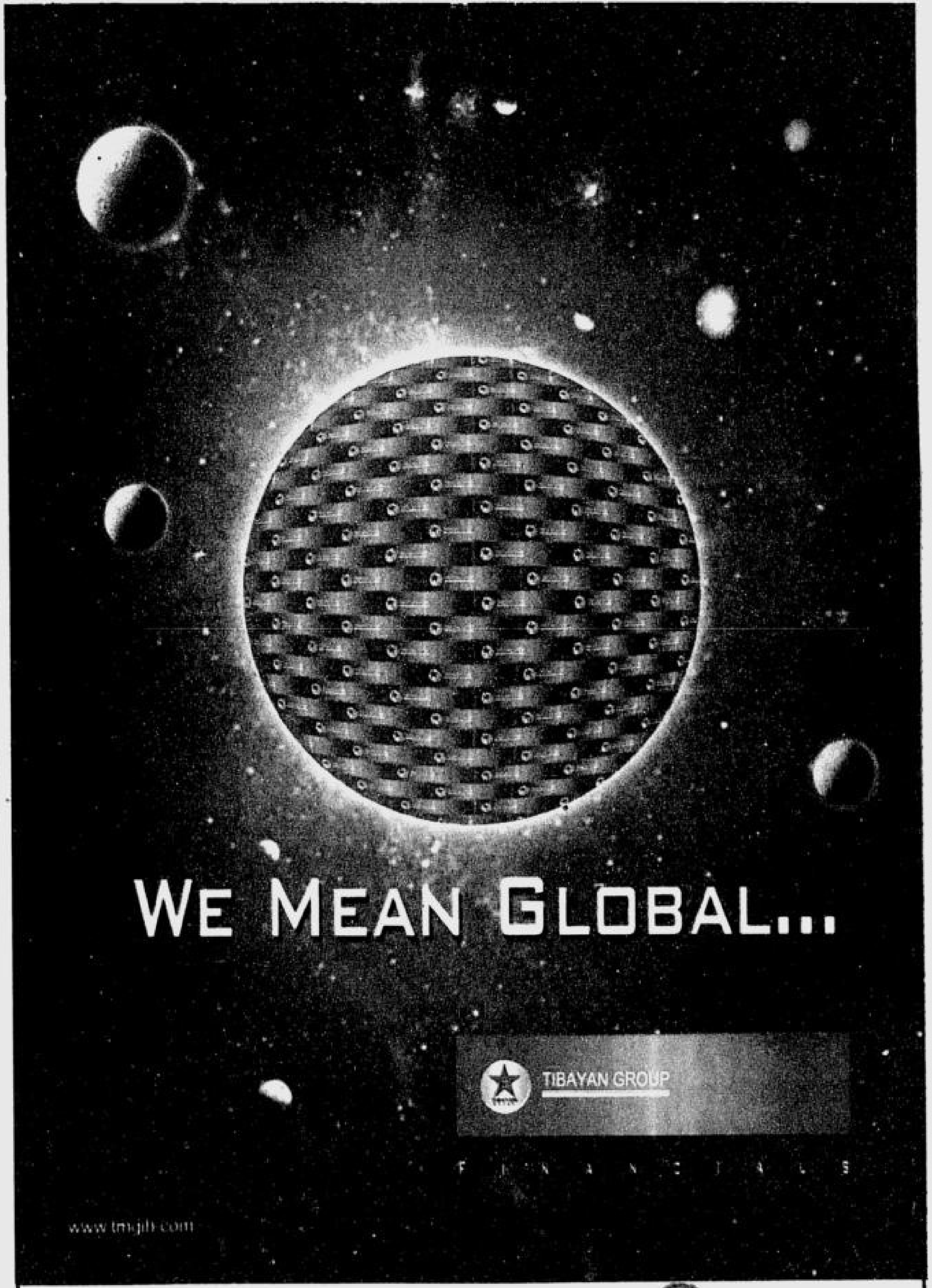
"In contrast," he added: "when the cost of credit declines and loanable funds become more readily available, total spending in the economy increases."

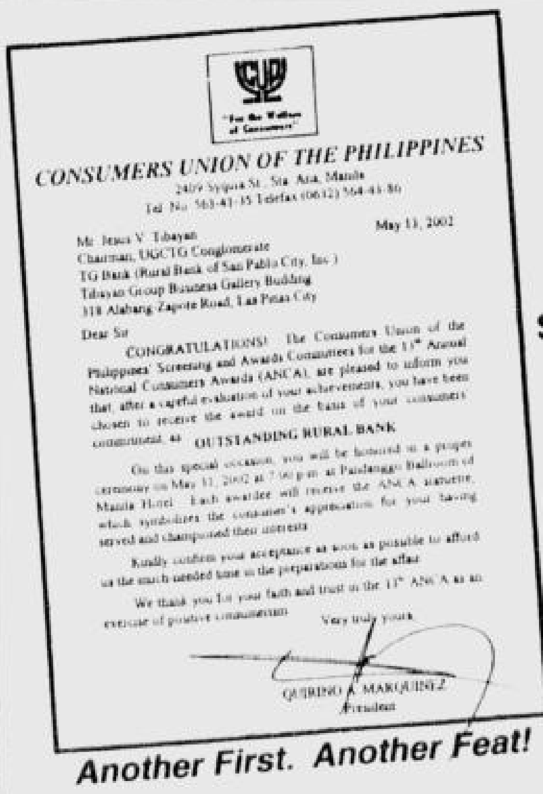
The Tibayan Group Investment Co., Inc. is one of the few Philippine Investment companies registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Aside from the Tibayan Group, the others are: Abacus Growth Fund, Inc., All Asia Fixed Income Fund, Inc., All Asia Fund, Inc., Ayala Life Fixed Income Fund, Inc., Citisec Growth and Income Fund, Inc., ECC Growth and Income Fund, Inc., Far East Fund, Inc., Filipino Fund, Inc., GSIS Mutual Fund, Inc., Philam Bond Fund, Inc., Philam Dollar Fund, Inc., Philam Fund, Inc., Philam Strategic Growth Fund, Inc., Philequity Fund, Inc., Philippine Growth Fund, Inc., Sun Life of Canada Prosperity Balanced Fund, Inc., Sun Life of Canada Prosperity Bond Fund, Inc., Sun Life of Canada Prosperity Philippine Equity Fund, Inc., The First Galleon Family Fund, Inc., The Mutual Fund Company of the Philippines, Inc., The Pacific Fund, Inc., United Fund, Inc., Vantage Dollar Income Fund, Inc., Vantage Money Market Fund, Inc., Vantage PSE Index Fund, Inc.

Tibayan also sits as president of the Las Piñas Chamber of Commerce and Industry and trustee of the Metro Manila Chamber. His financial conglomerate interests are not only confined to Philippine shores, as they extend to Hongkong, Switzerland and Australia.

TIBAYAN GROUP
FINANCIALS





"For the Welfare of Consumers"
CONSUMERS UNION OF THE PHILIPPINES

May 13, 2002

Mr. Jesus V. Tibayan
Chairman, UGCTG Conglomerate
TG Bank (Rural Bank of San Pablo City, Inc.)
Tibayan Group Business Gallery Building
318 Alabang-Zapote Road, Las Piñas City

Dear Sir

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President

Another First. Another Feat!

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TG BANK
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OUTSTANDING RURAL BANK
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in the
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Consumers
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Cocktales . . .

From page B3

with the listed Liberty Telecoms so it could piggyback on Liberty Telecoms' national backbone that Nextel does not have. The marriage would have made a perfect fit, Liberty Telecoms also being in the trunked-radio service, but the merger never took off, according to the grapevine, due to the issue of cost.

Now the planned Velarde takeover is being shot down by a group of local Nextel shareholders identified with its founding president/CEO, Antonio Urera.

The ex-president/CEO of Infocom Communications (Infopage), whose franchise it flipped in favor of Nextel, Urera left Nextel under bitter circumstances in February 2001 after failing to obtain a golden parachute from the US principals, according to the grapevine.

These boardroom issues have started filtering out after a shadowy consumers group, apparently under the direction of a Sigma Rhoan lawyer, started lobbying media and Congress to investigate the alleged US dummies in Nextel.

The Sigma Rhoan is playing a dangerous game, raising the bogey of dummies, since it could backfire and hit his brods at Accra. After all, it was Accra that facilitated the incorporation papers and the takeover of Nextel in what was then the Infopage paging company.

If you want an independent validation of this account, ask Presidential Adviser Gloria Tan-Climaco; she was, after all, present during the Nextel creation, being the investment banker that facilitated the deal.

Litigation against Lilia

THE PLANNED class suit against New York-based fund manager Lilia Clemente-Calderon will not be handled by lawyer Felicitas Aquino-Arroyo since the lawyer is both friends to Calderon and the potential plaintiff.

The good news is that Calderon has promised to make good whatever she owes Arroyo's client, after a *Cocktales* report appeared last Monday.

Still, Arroyo would not identify her client; according to the grapevine, it is no other than former Education Secretary Alejandro Roces.

In addition to Roces, San Francisco-based Lisa Yuchengco, the daughter of taipan Alfonso Yuchengco who publishes the Filipinas magazine, has a much bigger claim against Calderon.

What is apparently holding off the lawsuits is the long-standing friendship between Calderon and her aggravated clients.

Boorish in Bel-Air

THE FRIENDLY basketball match between Palm Village and Bel-Air teenage boys turned nasty the other Sunday after a Bel-Air father joined a melee and punched not once, but thrice, a Palm Village player.

Of course, the father of the Palm Village player joined the fray and smacked the Bel-Air father in retaliation.

A free-for-all ensued.

It was the most memorable Mother's Day for many fathers and sons of the two exclusive villages.

Heard through the grapevine

MIKEY Arroyo has sold his Land Cruiser just to be able to scrap cash for his coming wedding.

In addition, the presidential son-part time actor is banking on a new *pito-pito* film to be shown right before the wedding to help defray escalating wedding costs.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Gov't pushes price-based tax on AUVs

From page B1

still have to be worked out.

President Macapagal met with executives of Toyota and Honda Motor Corp. Tuesday, the second day of her working visit to Tokyo and Osaka.

In the briefing, the President said that the government was reviewing the issue.

Earlier, acting Press Secretary Silvestre Afable Jr. said that the tax issue was raised during the meeting with the President but that the government was non-committal.

Japanese carmakers wanted the government to maintain the tax on AUVs based on engine size, but Ford of the United States is putting pressure on the government to shift the excise tax system to one based on selling price.

"It is a matter of policy but the policy has not been set. They (Japanese car companies) were given assurances by (Trade) Secretary (Manuel) Roxas this will be studied by the government . . . but there were no specific or definite commitments (by government)," Afable had said.

Banks warned on high credit . . .

From page B1

nalize their rates," the BSP official said.

Reyes pointed out, however, that ATM operators incur substantial cost in handling the funds as well as in maintaining the facilities. As to the credit card charges, Reyes agreed that rates were exorbitant because most credit cardholders subsidize delinquent borrowers.

Buenaventura, in an earlier interview, said that credit card issuers must rationalize their marketing stance and to be more discriminating in taking new clients so that they would have an easier time collecting their receivables.

He had warned the credit card companies to start rationalizing their credit card activities before consumer groups would demand for more protection from the law.

The rules on mid-year bonus

THE GOVERNMENT is now paying no less than P8.4 billion to its more than a million employees by way of mid-year bonus, representing one-half of both the year's bonus and the annual cash gift of P5,000 each. This excludes almost the same amount, if not more, of money that government-owned and controlled corporations are allowed to pay its officials and personnel. The amount is much more than that paid to officials and staff in the provinces, cities, municipalities and *barangays* which is charged to local funds.

This brings us to the basic issues: What have the government employees done for us, taxpayers, that we're being billed billions of pesos for their bonuses and gifts? Are private firm employees entitled to mid-year bonus too? Is this a matter of legal mandate? What about those companies that can't afford it?

The law on bonus

The law governing 13th month pay (PD 851) is commonly referred to as the legal basis for the payment of bonus. That is a misconception. We have to differentiate the 13th month pay and the bonus. The first is an obligation arising from law. The second is purely a gift. (Phil. Duplicators, GR 110068, 15 February 1995.)

While employees can go to the DOLE/NLRC to demand for 13th month pay, they can't compel employers to pay bonus, except if it is mandated in a collective bargaining agreement, or has become an established company practice. A bonus is a gift that springs from the generosity of the employer. It cannot be "enforceable or demandable," as one cannot be legally compelled to give a gift. (Business Information System, GR 103575, 5 April 1993.)

Management prerogative

In the exercise of its business judgment, the company may grant a bonus to its employees in recognition of their industry, loyalty, excellent performance, good behavior, long years of service or exemplary deeds beyond the call of duty. (UST Faculty Union, GR 90445, 02 Oct. 1990).

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

But then again, the exercise of that judgment is not subject to discretionary review by the labor arbiter or the NLRC. The firm cannot be compelled to assume the onerous burden by law or court order. (Kamaya Point, GR 75289, 31 Aug. 1989).

Company practice

When the giving of the bonus has already become a practice for a considerable period of time and that it has ripened into a contractual obligation, it may already partake the nature of a "demandable" right on the part of the regular recipients. (Marcos vs. NLRC, GR 111744, 8 Sept. 1995; Davao Fruits, GR 85073, 24 August 1993).

However, if the granting of the bonus is hinged on profitability, it cannot be demanded unless the condition is fulfilled. If there is no profit, it is not just or legal to demand for such bonus. (Traders Royal Bank, GR 88168, 30 Aug. 1990). Also, the bonus may be forfeited when an employee commits an administrative offense. (Republic Planters Bank, GR 117460, 6 Jan. 1997).

Norms on company practice

When is an act of an employer deemed to have already ripened into company practice? First, the period must be long and successive, three years, for instance. (Davao Integrated, GR 102132, 19 Mar. 1993). Second, the act must be done consistently and intentionally. (Tiangco vs. Leogardo, GR L-57636, 16 May 1983). Third, the act should not be a product of erroneous interpretation of a difficult or doubtful question of law. (Globe Mackay, GR 74156, 29 June 1988). Fourth, if the company grant was done out of an erroneous judgment, or a mistake or error in computation, no vested right can be said to have accrued.

Government and private firms

Equity issues arise when public sector personnel are granted certain benefits while those in private firms are not. Of course, they aren't similarly situated and thus, can't demand equal treatment. But they are all employees.

Moral and ethical issues also arise if we think that the government is bankrupt or if it is overdraft, overextended and perceived to be over-manned, corrupt and inefficient. What moral right has it then to reward its people with billions of pesos in taxpayers' money? We need somebody authoritative to answer that question.

Cola not a bonus

If the government wants to help its employees cope with the rising cost of living, to protect their purchasing power and to cushion the impact of an oil price hike and the increases in power rates, water rates and tuition fees, some safety nets in the form of Cola (Cost of Living Allowance), not a bonus, may be granted.

A bonus can be granted only in the case of extraordinary performance. In the light of the deteriorating quality of public service, we don't believe there is either rhyme or reason to reward these guys in government. If some politicians want to be liberal, let them give away their own money, not the blood money of the taxpayers who are already overburdened by the corruption, inanities and ineptitude in the bureaucracy.

Who deserves a bonus?

A bonus, mid-year or year-end, is appropriate when civil servants have acquired the basic sense of client-orientation and genuine public service.

As long as we, the taxpayers, are neglected and our grievances not acted upon or are ignored, the public servants do not deserve any bonus at all. That is as simple and clear as that.

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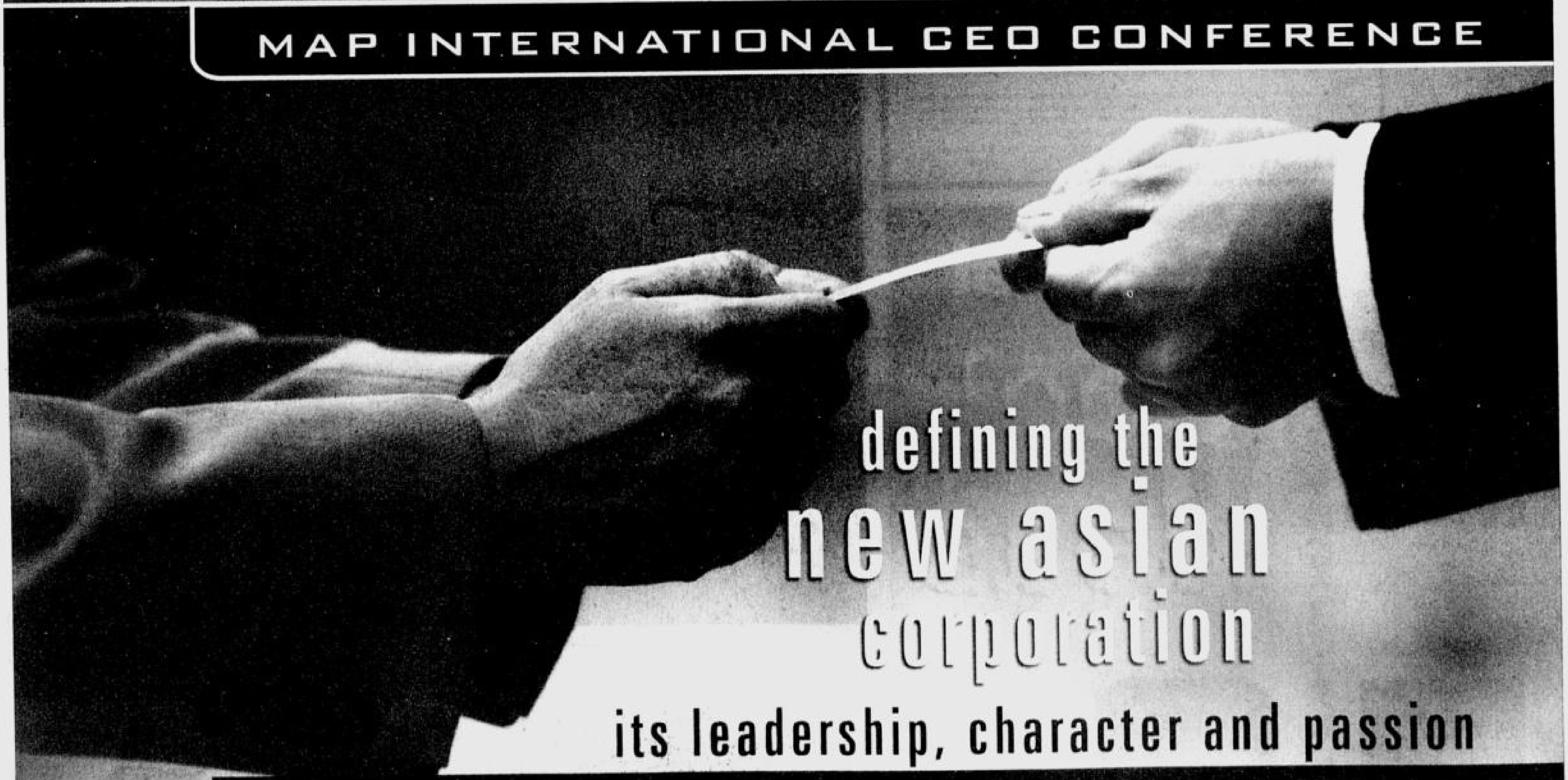

The Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) will conduct its prestigious annual management conference June 19, 2002. The conference will be attended exclusively by CEOs and other C-level executives, and has as its focus three central issues. The first of these issues is leadership. What kinds of leaders are required to build Asia's future industry champions? The second issue is the enterprise itself. What qualities will industry-leading enterprises exhibit? The third issue is community. What will be the nature of the relationship between the enterprise and the various elements of the ecosystem in which it operates?

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ROBERT S. KAPLAN AUTHOR OF THE BALANCED SCORECARD

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Prof. Kaplan will deliver the opening and closing keynote presentations.

INVITED PANELISTS

PANEL ONE
MANAGEMENT: LEADING THE NEW ASIAN CORPORATION
Moderator: Michael Vatikiotis, Editor, Far Eastern Economic Review
Panelists: Charles Tsang, President, Korn/Ferry International
Erramon Aboitiz, EVP, Aboitiz Equity Ventures
Nina Aguas, Country Business Manager, Citibank Retail
Clement Wang, Associate Director for Research, National University of Singapore

PANEL TWO
ENTERPRISE: DEFINING THE NEW ASIAN CORPORATION I
Moderator: Rex C. Drilon II, COO, Ortigas and Co.
Panelists: Brett Decker, Editorial Page Writer, Asian Wall Street Journal
Horace Yuen, Assistant Director, Management Services Agency, HK Government
Roberto De Ocampo, President, Asian Institute of Management
Delfin Lazaro, President and CEO, iAyala

LUNCH PANEL
CHARACTER: DEFINING THE NEW ASIAN CORPORATION II
Moderator: ChaCha L. Lazaro, Producer and Host, The Probe Team
Panelists: Francis Estrada, Chairman, Equity Managers Asia
Ilyas Khan, Founder, Techpacific Capital Limited
Alan Thompson, Regional Director, Stern Stewart Southeast Asia.
Eckie Gonzales, Chief Operating Officer, Benpres Holdings Corporation

PANEL THREE
NETWORKS: THE NEW ASIAN ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY
Moderator: Carol E. Carreon, President and CEO, BayanTrade
Panelists: Luis Miguel Aboitiz, V.P., Aboitiz Equity Ventures
Toby Marion, Asia CEO, Thomas Group
Sandy Kemper, President, Global Trading Web
Roberto Romulo, Chairman, e-ASEAN Task Force

PANEL FOUR
REACHING OUT: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE NEW ASIAN CORPORATION
Moderator: Michael Alan Hamlin, Managing Director, Team Asia
Panelists: Michael Vatikiotis, Editor, Far Eastern Economic Review
Victoria P. Garchitorena, President, Ayala Foundation
Gina Lopez, Managing Director, ABS-CBN Foundation

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Provincial Suppliers may contact the nearest regional office.

Regional Offices	Contact Person	Address	Telephone Nos.
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2. Central Visayas	Ramiro "Spines" Espina	Unit 6 Galleria Fuente, Mango Ave. Cebu City	(032) 2531532 / 2532547
3. Eastern Visayas	Renato Roldan	Rm. 305, 3/F Dynasty Square Bldg. Zamora St., Tacloban City, Leyte	(053) 3253730
4. Mindanao	Julio Cruz	2nd Flr. La Fontana Di Remedios Arcade Bolton St., Davao City	(082) 3052813

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is given that the intestate estate of the late PILAR BANAAG was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc#11, Page#4, Book#LIV, Series of 2001 under Not. Pub. Ramon M. Medina of Taal, Batangas.
(PDI- May 17, 24 & 31, 2002)

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d) Age Limit 35
e) Must have excellent command of English Language

INTERVIEWS WILL BE HELD IN MANILA.

THIS AD IS APPROVED BY POEA / MAG-INGAT SA ILLEGAL RECRUITER

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR
AUTHORITY TO INSTALL A 40 MVA
SUBSTATION

ERC CASE NO. 2001-852

SAN FERNANDO ELECTRIC LIGHT AND
POWER COMPANY, INC. (SFELAPCO),
x---x

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given of the filing by applicant San Fernando Electric Light and Power Company, Inc. (SFELAPCO) on **August 2, 2001** of an application for authority to install a 40 MVA substation.

The Commission has set the application for hearing on **June 4, 2002** at three thirty (3:30 P.M.) in the afternoon at the ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor, Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

All interested parties who may wish to comment on or oppose the said application should file their comments and/or oppositions on or before the date of hearing. Such parties who may wish to have the details of the application and who shall have manifested to the Commission their desire and intention to participate actively in the proceedings, may request that before the date of hearing, they be furnished with copies of the application by the applicant, which is hereby directed to furnish the parties making such request with copies of the application and its attachments. Likewise, any such interested party may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable **FE B. BARIN**, Chairman, and the Honorables **MARY ANNE B. COLAYCO**, **OLIVER B. BUTALID**, **CARLOS R. ALINDADA** and **LETICIA V. IBAY**, Commissioners, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 11th day of April, 2002 at Pasig City.

(Sgd) **FRUCTUOSO C. LAGUNZAD JR.**
Executive Director III

(PDI - May 24, 2002)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All interested Consultants/Geodetic Engineers are invited to apply for eligibility and to bid for the conduct of a Parcellary/Land Survey for purposes of delineating the planted areas equivalent to 153 parcels more or less having a total area of 458.5 has. situated at Brgy. New Daliaon Plantation, Tungkalan and Manuel Guianga covered under the Mt. Talomo-Lipadas watershed project of DCWD.

APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT - Php 558,216.60

Pre-C/Eligibility requirements are available at the DCWD BAC-B office starting **May 17, 2002** during its business hours. Deadline for submission of Pre-C/eligibility documents is on **May 31, 2002**. Schedule of the Pre-bid conference and Opening of Bids shall be announced later.

DCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality/informality of the bids received and to accept only such bids which are advantageous to the District.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. EDWIN V. REGALADO**
Chairman, Pre-qualification, Evaluation & Awards Committee for Consultancy (PEACC)

(PDI - May 17 & 24, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
Km. 5, J.P. Laurel Avenue, Davao City, Philippines
Tel. No. 221-9400 (connecting all departments)
Tel. Nos. 221-6218 to 19 (Regional Training Center,
Madapo Hill, Davao City)
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INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY/ APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All interested contractors with category PCAB D and above, and IAC Special Classification on Well Drilling or Water Supply are invited to participate in the bidding for the RE-DRILLING OF TWO (2) PRODUCTION WELLS (PWs), using Rotary Method.

Approved Budget for the Contract:

PW No. 10, located at Dumoy, Davao City	**Php 3,173,055.70**
PW No. 14, located at Puan, Davao City	**3,201,164.80**

Pre-C/Eligibility requirements are available at the DCWD BAC-B office starting **May 20, 2002** during its business hours. Deadline for submission of Pre-C/Eligibility documents will be on or before May 31, 2002. Opening of Bids will be on **July 18, 2002**.

DCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informalities therein, or to award the project to a bid that is considered most advantageous to the agency.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. EDWIN V. REGALADO**
Chairman, DCWD-BAC-B

(PDI - May 17 & 24, 2002)

Bonifacio Global City's Cool Cinema Nights: summer's newest blockbuster

FRIDAY nights are definitely alive at the Bonifacio Global City with the successful run of "Cool Cinema Nights", a one-of-a-kind free outdoor and drive-in viewing experience, which is turning out to be one of the summer's biggest hits.

Bringing the concept of outdoor lawn movies popular in the United States and Europe to Metro Manila. "Cool Cinema Nights" relives the magic of our favorite Hollywood blockbuster movies on a 60-foot giant screen dramatically set against a backdrop of architectural marvels Pacific Plaza Towers and the soon-to-be-completed One McKinley Place. Complete with food concessionaires and free fun booths, the cinema (or event) grounds naturally echoes the vibrance and energy of nearby establishments such as The Fort and Bonifacio Stopover.

Since its soft launch last April 26, "Cool Cinema Nights" have been attracting families and motorists on the lookout for an evening of fun and relaxation. Kicking off with an estimated 1000-strong crowd on the first night, the succeeding Fridays saw a dramatic rise in attendees with cars and families coming in droves.

Araneta Center brings back the Old Santacruzan

ON May 25, Araneta Center returns to tradition and brings to Filipinos an authentic Santacruzan, the queen of the May time festivals in the Philippines.

Araneta Centers' grand Santacruzan, dubbed *"Reinas y Flores,"* aims to restore the Santacruzan to its original version when it was really a novena procession in commemoration of Empress Helena's finding of the Holy Cross upon which Christ was crucified. Unlike the contemporary Santacruzan where historical characters dressed in colorful costumes were featured in the parade, *"Reinas y Flores"* features traditional biblical characters and saints who reflect the true meaning of faith and spirituality that the event originally aspired.

The beautiful Lani Mercado will be the Emperatriz (also the Reina Elena in this Santacruzan). Her prince consort, Constantine, will be up-and-coming actor, Jolo Revilla, Lani's own son.

Representing other characters are national beauties from the Bb. Pilipinas Charities Inc., invited actors and actresses by German Moreno and other celebrities from Metro Manila, particularly Quezon City.

As a bonus treat, Araneta Center will hold a grand variety show at 3 p.m. to be hosted by the Master Showman himself, German Moreno. Expect a star-studded show where the country's favorite stars will drop by.

First Cebu gamefishing tournament at the Cebu Yacht Club

THE EXPO Specialists will hold a Gamefishing Tournament for the first time in Cebu. It will gather the region's most avid marine leisure sports and gamefishing enthusiasts in one day of fun-filled competition. Registration starts on May 31 at the Cebu Marine Expo exhibit area with the actual competition commencing on June 1 at the Cebu Yacht Club.

Final judging of the overall catch will be on June 2 at 4 p.m. Dinner and awarding ceremony will follow.

The tournament is in conjunction with the 7th Marine Expo and Boatshow, which will run from May 31 to June 2 also at the Cebu Yacht Club. Manila and Cebu-based sea craft makers and distributors of marine leisure boats and equipment will exhibit their different products and brands along with other companies.

The Cebu Gamefishing Tournament is sponsored by Rudy Project Sunglasses, Plantation Bay Mactan, Casino Filipino Cebu, Charlie 101.9 FM and Kiss FM.

For more details about the Gamefishing Tournament or the Boatshow, call Gio Ruiz or Mai Demeterio at (032) 231-5462 or (032) 231-5809.

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JOB MARKET
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OBITUARIES

"... it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does;
do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid."
John 14:27

Our Dearly Beloved Ogie

DOUGLAS VALENTINO G. PLAZA

Bronze Medalist in Taekwondo, Barcelona Olympics
RP Representative, 2001 Scuba Diving Competition (Hawaii, USA)
Co-Chair, Butuan City Physical Fitness and Sports Dev't. Coordinating Council
Champion, 1998 Butuan Badminton Club Seeding Tournament
Sponsor, World Vision Development Foundation Balay Silonganan
Member, Chaplets of the Divine Mercy and Love and Mercy Community
President, D.O. Plaza Holdings Corporation
Owner/Managing Partner, Butuan Vespa Motors
Devout Catholic, kind and generous friend
Loving Son and Brother

Joined his Creator on May 17, 2002

His bereaved mother, **former Agusan del Sur Governor VALENTINA G. PLAZA**; brothers & sisters **Former Mayor DEMOCRITO II, LYDIA, EVELYN, ROSELYN, ROLANDO, ERLINDA, DEMOCRITO III, Congressman RODOLFO "Ompong", VICTOR, Agusan del Sur Governor ADOLPH EDWARD, MA. VALENTINA**; brothers and sisters-in-law **Mayor Daisy Plaza, William Millana, Jose Carlos, Alice Plaza, Allan Tibby, Victoria Plaza, Shirley Plaza, Rebecca Plaza** and **Jose Adolfo**; relatives and friends request pious readers for prayers for the eternal repose of Ogie's soul.

His remains lie in state at the Family residence in KM. 2, Baan, Butuan City.

Interment will be held on May 25, 2002 after the 1:00 PM Mass at the St. Joseph's Cathedral, Butuan City.

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Wife of the late **Judge Deogracias S. Solis**
of Tanza, Cavite
Peacefully joined her Creator on May 21, 2002 at the age of 90

Her bereaved daughter **Grace & Lenito Corcuera**;
grandchildren: **Noveleen, Vina, Augustus Caesar Corcuera**;
Nephews, Nieces and Grandchildren:
Teodoro & Adelina Estacion
Mary Lourdes, Christine
Bienvenida Estacion Del Rosario
Deogracias & Susan, Maria Asuncion, Rodolfo & Elizabeth, Eric & Elizabeth
Luz Estacion Cedron
Apolinario & Elizabeth
Gregorio & Elpidia Estacion
Eliza & Marlon, Emmanuel & Thelma, Asuncion(+)
Marcelino(+) & Benita
Rogelio(+), Marcelino Jr. & Flor, Eufrocinia & Nestor, Jaime & Lilia, Wilfredo & Mary, Benjamin & Flor, Neriza & Jeffrey, Mary Gina & Efren
Emelina Estacion Cruz(+)
Nona
Melba & Rafael Trias
Marites & Chito, Mary Rose & Carl
Corazon & Manuel Alvarez(+)
Cenon & Nani, Maricor & Regi
Blanquita & Honesto Tahimic
Myron & Gigi, Vladimir & Corinne, Ezer
Cenon, Jr.(+) & Remy
Tiffany, Hannah, Christabelle
Tomasito Estacion
Marianito & Anna Estacion
Cenonito, Maranito Jr., Carla

And all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at 176 Retirees Village II Tanza, Cavite.

Interment will be at The Roman Catholic Cemetery on Sunday, May 26, 2002 after the 2:00 p.m. mass at Holy Cross Parish Tanza, Cavite.

Crystal's 150 products now available

CRYSTAL Mansion International Philippines Inc. now has 150 products available to all CMIP distributors nationwide. This was announced in a press briefing led by CMIP top honcho Pete D. Avila.

"All these products are not only limited to the business partners. Non-tracking account holders will certainly benefit from this wide range of product lines," CEO and general manager Avila assured the press.

CMIP is the Philippine pioneer in back-end support programs where business partners and distributors continuously benefit from their efforts. The company features four income opportunities unavailable in other multi-level or direct-marketing plans. These are income through networking, income through big sales discounts, entrepreneurship management of 'negosyo' centers, and local and foreign indent royalties.

CMIP currently markets fashionable eyewear products, jewelry and personal accessories, healthcare supplements, household support and maintenance products, tools and devices, and livelihood implements and supplies.

"This is truly a great opportunity for the hardworking, highly driven distributors and business partners who are constantly on the lookout for new and fresh products to offer their expanding markets," explained Avila.

CMIP's customer service centers and 'Negosyo" centers are strategically located to ensure the products are evenly distributed, thereby avoiding costly business losses through glut and unnecessary competition for market share.

Crystal Mansion International Philippines is conveniently located at Unit 3204, Tektite East Tower, PSE Center, Ortigas, Pasig City, with telephone number 687-1074 and fax number 637-0785.

Philips 'Summer Load of Giveaways' promo extended

PHILIPS' 'Summer Load of Giveaways' promo has been extended up to May 31. This exciting promo lets you take home exciting free items just by purchasing Philips' superb audio equipment. For every purchase of Philips' VCD Mini Hi-fi such as the FW-V780, FW-V720, FW-V520, FW-V320 or FW-V220, you get cool items that will make summertime truly fun. The freebie package includes 3 great movie VCDs, two Karaoke VCDs, a microphone for those sing-along moments or a cool VCD organizer for your movie collection. This is your chance to get exciting Philips products while getting great freebies to make summer the best season ever.

Come to me, All of you who are weary and burdened,
And I will give you rest.
Matthew 11:28

UY CHING PAY *"PAYA"*

Peacefully joined our Creator on May 23, 2002
at the age of 73.

His loving wife **Paulina**; children **Rosie** & **Carlos Tan**, **Edward** & **Corazon Uy**, **Cherrie** & **Jaime Ang**, **Reynald** & **Shirley Uy**; grandchildren and all relatives and friends request for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at his residence, No. 5 Acias Pinili Street, Dumaguete City.

Interment will be on Sunday, May 26, 2002 at the Dumaguete Memorial Park after the 2:00 p.m. funeral Mass at the Dumaguete Christian Church, Dr. V. Locsin Street, Dumaguete City.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the UY CHING PAY FOUNDATION will be highly appreciated.

Cement prices start falling as local supply stabilizes

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry yesterday reported that cement prices have dropped substantially over the last two months following a surge in March as supply finally kept up with the seasonal peak in demand.

In a report to the National Price Coordinating Council, the DTI said cement prices nationwide have dropped 7 percent to a P124.40 per bag average as of May 17 from the P133.90 per bag.

The DTI reported that cement prices fell between P7 and P30 per bag in 11 regions nationwide in the last two months while four regions—Regions I, II, III and Cordillera Autonomous Region—saw cement prices climb between P2 and P10 in the same period.

The country's biggest cement markets, Metro Manila and Region IV, saw prices fall by P10 to P125 per bag and P15 to P135 per bag, respectively, in the last two months.

Acting Trade and Industry Secretary Adrian Cristobal Jr. said cement prices have come down with the stabilization of cement supply particularly in Metro Manila and Region IV.

The sudden cement shortage in March saw prices shoot up to P135 per bag in Metro Manila and as much as P150 in Region IV.

Cristobal said the drop in prices should alleviate consumer groups' fears that the provisional duty of P20.60 per bag on cement imports would lead to the skyrocketing of cement prices.

Although the Tariff Commission had endorsed the lifting of the provisional duty, a court order obtained by local cement producers has allowed the DTI to continue collecting the premium on cement imports up to its expiry on June 28 this year.

The DTI agreed in December to impose a provisional duty on cement imports for six months after members of the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp. agreed to keep their prices within the P125 to P135 price range.

The biggest drop was registered at P30 to P95 per bag in Cebu and P100 per bag in Zamboanga as traders engaged in cutthroat competition to protect their respective market share in these markets.

PAL plea for deal extension junked

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT and the five government financial institutions with shareholdings in Philippine Airlines have rejected the flag carrier's request for a five-year extension of their P2-billion put option agreement that lapsed last May 7.

Under the agreement signed in May 1996, PAL agreed to purchase the government's remaining shares at P5 per share for a total of P2 billion within six years ending May this year. This was in exchange for the waiver of the government's and the GFIs' preemptive rights during a capital call that required the infusion of P3.4 billion in fresh funds into the airline.

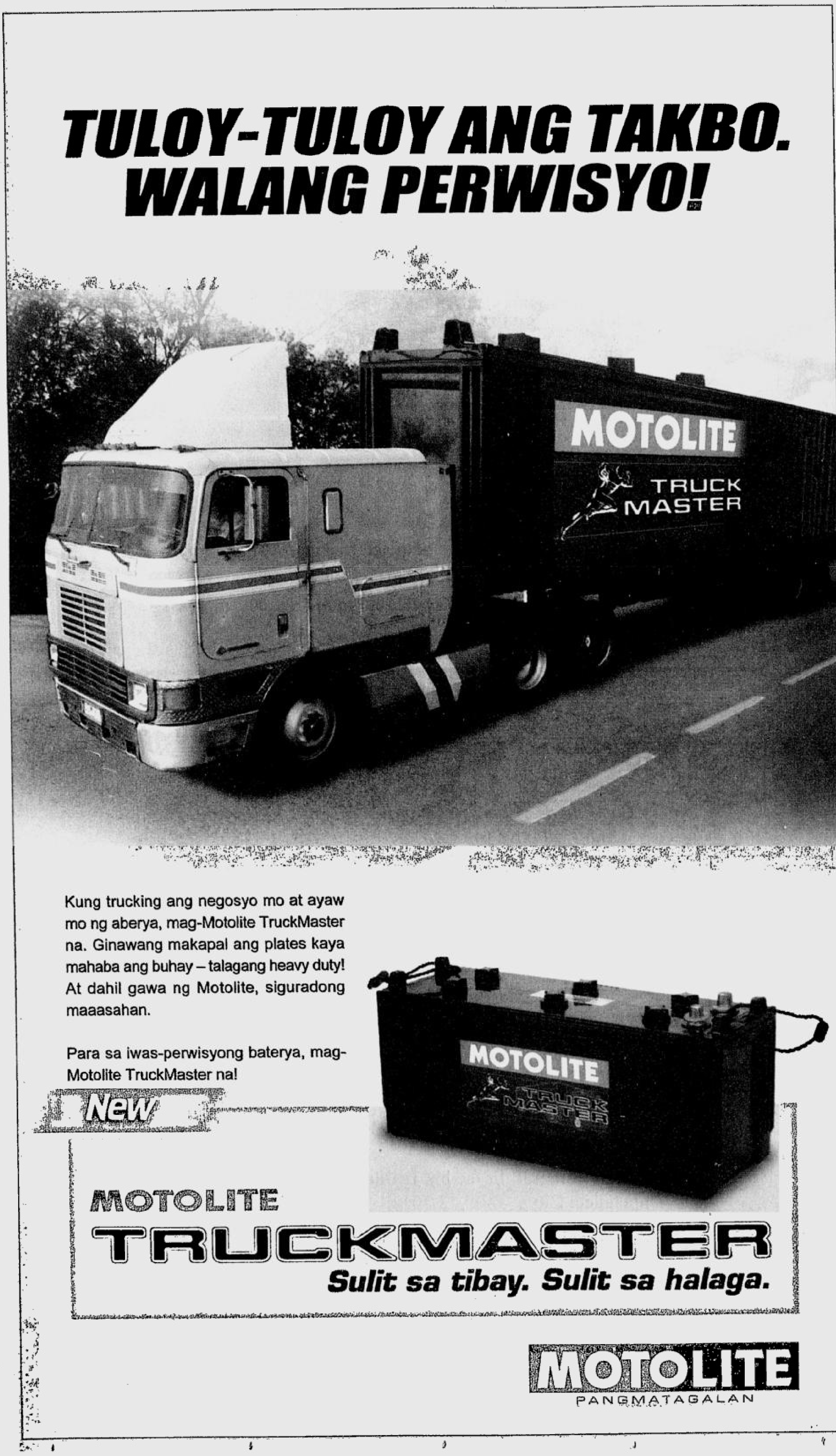
GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia yesterday said that the government and the GFIs would press PAL to honor the agreement and to pay them P2 billion for their shares.

"They (PAL) had asked us to extend the agreement for another five years without interest. Of course, we rejected it because it was disadvantageous not only to the GSIS but to the government as well," said Garcia.

Garcia said the GSIS had invested P2.2 billion in PAL since the 1970s and of the amount, only P750 million could be recovered under the put option agreement.

"If PAL is unable to pay, then its guarantors should settle the liability. Otherwise, we will have to sue them," said Garcia. PAL's guarantors include some companies owned by taipan Lucio Tan such as Fortune Tobacco and Asia Brewery.

Of the 4.26 percent combined interest of the state in PAL, the state-owned insurer and pension fund accounts for 1.37 percent while the national government's stake is now down to 0.96 percent. The others and their shareholdings in PAL are as follow: Land Bank of the Phils., 0.69 percent; Development Bank of the Philippines, 0.31 percent; the AFP-Retirement Service Benefits System, 0.31 percent, and Philippine National Bank, 0.46 percent.



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PANGMATAGALAN

Malacañang revives governance system for regional growth

By Doris C. Dumlao

MALACAÑANG has revived the system of assigning a Cabinet member to be responsible for a specific region in a bid to speed up economic development in the countryside.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said in a statement that President Macapagal-Arroyo recently signed Administrative Order No. 34 which revived the Cabinet Officers for Regional Development governance system.

The CORD policy was introduced in 1988 during the term of President Corazon Aquino but was abolished by ousted President Joseph Estrada in September 1998.

Under the system, a Cabinet member would be responsible for bringing up his assigned region's concerns and perceptions during meetings with the secretaries of other departments, the Office of the President and other concerned agencies.

Canlas briefed the Cabinet officials on their additional function as Cabinet officers for regional development in a meeting recently presided by Vice President Teofisto T. Guingona Jr.

Among the new duties are:

- Identify and clarify key issues and concerns affecting peace and order, and security through the Regional Peace and Order Councils and the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security sub-national levels;
- Coordinate with and assist the Regional Development Councils and other local special bodies in defining priorities and projects in the region;

ATI posts 32% surge in profit

By Abigail L. Ho

SOUTH Harbor port operator Asian Terminals Inc. registered a 32.3-percent net income growth for the first quarter of the year to P103.1 million from last year's P77.9 million.

Its revenues also went up 4.6 percent to P763 million from P729.2 million for the same period in 2001. Operating income likewise increased by 4.1 percent, from P205 million last year to P213.3 million in 2002.

The growth in profit and sales was attributed mainly to the increase in the volume of commodities that ATI handled at the Mariveles Grain Terminal in Bataan and the South Harbor Container Terminal in Manila.

Grains handled at the MGT increased 78 percent to 568,695 metric tons. This volume went over ATI's targets by 29 percent.

Aside from the volume increase, MGT also handled more commodities that paid high terminal handling rates.

At the South Harbor, on the other hand, the ports and logistics firm handled 135,506 twenty equivalent units (TEUs) of containerized cargoes, a 1.2-percent growth from year before volumes.

The company also saw steady growth in its commercial logistics business.

Alaska declares cash dividend

THE BOARD of Alaska Milk Corp. (AMC) has declared an aggregate 30-centavo-per-share cash dividend this year in the recent annual stockholders' meeting.

The dividend represents close to a 15-percent dividend yield based on Alaska's average share price over the last 30 trading days—the highest in the market today.

Securities analysts estimate the market dividend yield in 2000 and 2001 at an average of 1.3 percent to 1.7 percent.

Alaska will pay out the cash dividend to its shareholders quarterly beginning June 30, 2002 to March 30, 2003.

Alaska's strong financial position is reflected in its healthy cash flow and absence of long-term liabilities.

While it has been seeking acquisition opportunities in the consumer foods sector, it has chosen to enhance shareholder value by declaring the cash dividend plan.

The company likewise continues to buyback its shares from the market, with over 70 million shares bought back since the inception of the stock buy-back program in 1997.

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MANAGING INVENTORY

Make sure goods fly off the shelves

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ASIDE from pilferage and fire, what probably strikes fear in the hearts of retailers is the extremes of excess inventory and running out of stock.

If you have too many products your costs skyrocket, because your money is tied in goods. If you lack supply, you lose out on the opportunity to make a sale.

Storing and taking care of products that nobody seems to want not only take up valuable space, but tie up hard-earned money that would have otherwise been spent on products that the consumers want.

These concerns, thus, make it imperative for retail companies to master the art of putting in just the right number of products that people want at the right time, and more importantly, at the right price.

Conversely, these retailers want to keep slow moving items to a minimum.

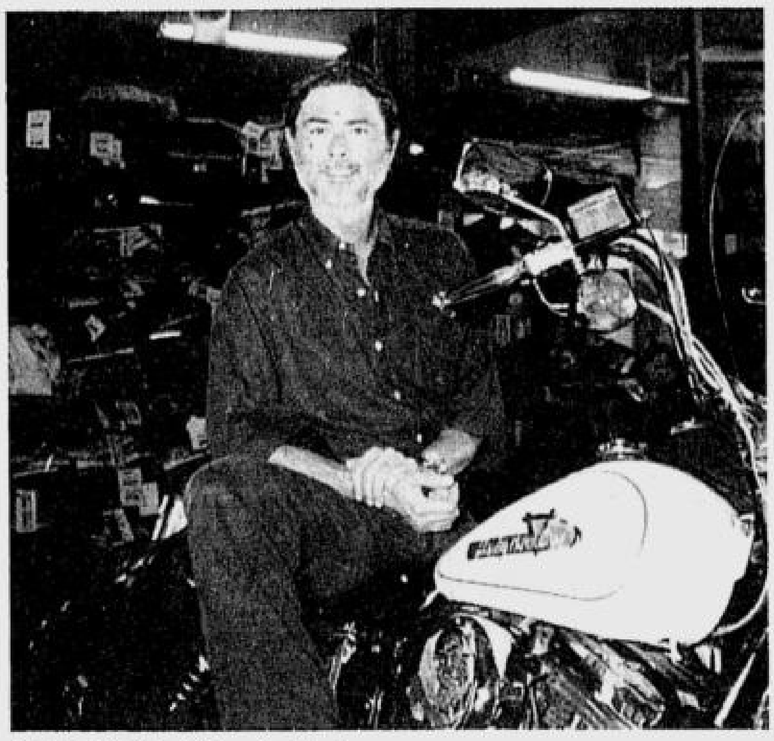
The INQUIRER interviewed three local retailers to share some of their techniques in inventory or supply chain management. It starts from the sourcing of the goods to the delivery and sale at the different stores or branches.

Linea Italia

Mention Italian fashion and brands like Versace and Prada and most Filipinos would automatically think expensive.

Linea Italia's chair Alfredo Panicucci, however, has developed a unique supply chain that not only allows him to bring in new products from Italy every two months, but at the same time sell these at low prices.

In an interview in his main Marconi stockhouse, Panicucci says he has virtually no problem with excess inventory because whatever he is not able to sell at the primary Linea Italia stores all over the metropolis, he sells at slashed prices of as much as 80 percent off the tag price at his stockhouses or warehouses.



PANICUCCI of Linea Italia Group

"This allows us to aggressively price our products because we can sell everything. The money that we generate from the stores and the sale goods are then used to buy new products from Italy every 60 days on the average," he explains.

Panicucci says the pricing strategy also starts from the deals with the suppliers themselves, manufacturers of Italian fashion from all over Italy.

"Because we have a whole chain of stores, we can bargain good terms with our suppliers. We tell them that we will get their excess production but at soft terms. They like it and we like it, it is a win-win situation," he says.

He adds that he passes on the savings to the consumers by keeping prices low.

The affordable prices have made the Linea Italia chain quite popular in Manila.

"This makes it harder for other companies to compete with us because we have small mark-ups. I think that pricing products too high only attracts competition because they can undercut. But since we are already low and we have a chain, it will be hard for them to penetrate the market," he says.

Linea Italia has 15 retail outlets and six warehouses, eight of which are in Cebu and Bacolod.

He says having an extensive network and a marketing campaign that combines low prices with a high brand image make Linea Italia sell its products fast.

"If something does not sell in the first tier stores, we are willing to sell at the stockhouses at prices

MAKE/ C4

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Japan cinema counts on multiplex magic

TOKYO—Masaaki Nonaka has been in line for an hour and a half at a Tokyo movie theater, trapped in a stuffy corridor with hundreds of people waiting to see "Spider-Man." A trip to the bathroom or the popcorn stand would mean several minutes of shoving and bearing dirty looks.

That's the price of going to see a high-octane Hollywood movie on opening day in Japan.

Or is it?

Across town, Takashi Yokouchi is about to see "Spider-Man" too, but he's not in line. For the same price, he's got an assigned seat and the freedom to roam.

"I only go to watch movies at multiplex theaters now," he says.

When Western cinema operators brought the sprawling, multiple-screen theatres to Japan nine years ago, the industry was in decline. Cinemas were folding and attendance had dropped to the lowest level on record. The newcomers had big visions that multiplexes would turn things around.

So far, attendance nationwide has failed to rise convincingly despite an annual increase in the number of screens. But industry executives say multiplexes have shaken up Japan's infamously closed and rigid cinema industry and laid the groundwork for a long-awaited rebound.

One of the biggest changes has been a shift in the balance of power away from local industry giants such as Toho Co and Shochiku Co.

In the past, Toho's and Shochiku's cinemas drew the biggest crowds in Japan's "Big Nine" cities. Distributors, whose profits are proportionate to ticket sales, were eager to get business from them and agreed to exclusive deals. That effectively gave Toho and Shochiku the power to decide which movies played where.

Even after the first multiplexes opened, that system continued. Industry sources say Japanese cinema operators often forced distributors to hold a film's release elsewhere until after it had played in their theaters for a week or two. US companies repeatedly protested.

But as multiplex cinemas began to dominate in outlying areas, distributors' allegiance to Toho and Shochiku crumbled.

Toho and Shochiku recognized this, and now operate about a dozen multiplexes each.

That meant that in the suburbs, where only a few small cinemas once existed, Japanese sud-

JAPAN/ C5

Tax-weary retirees are welcome here

By Rabiev Tobias M. Racho
SGV & Co,

TAX-FILES

ATTENTION foreigners: Are taxes threatening to consume your life savings and retirement fund? Give yourself a break and come, retire and make the Philippines your home.

After years of hard work and paying taxes, you definitely deserve to retire in a pleasant, comfortable and hopefully, a tax hassle-free environment. A place like this is usually called a "retirement haven."

As such, it offers retirees certain tax incentives and privileges. By reducing the tax burden, it is hoped that the retiree will be able to manage his assets more efficiently and profitably during the retirement.

Haven

The Philippines is one of the few countries that many consider as a possible retirement haven for foreign nationals. For foreigners out there, you may want to find out what this country offers in terms of tax benefits and privileges for retirees.

First, we need to discuss the concept of retirement from the perspective of Philippine labor laws. Art. 287 of the Philippine Labor Code, as amended by RA No. 7641, entitles an employee in the Philippines, citizen or otherwise, to receive retirement benefits under existing laws, collective bargaining agreements and other contracts.

In the absence of a retirement plan, an employee upon reaching the age of 60 years or more, but not beyond 65 years, which is the compulsory retirement age, and who has served at least five years in the establishment, may retire and shall be entitled to retirement pay equivalent to at least one half-month salary for every year of service.

Foreigner

The rules implementing the retirement law also provides that the payment of retirement benefits "shall apply to all employees in the private sector, regardless of their position, designation or status and irrespective of the method by which their wages are paid."

Thus, if you are a foreign national and currently employed in the Philippines, have served your employer for at least five years and at least 60 years of age (but not more than 65), your employer is required by law to provide you with retirement pay.

Philippine Tax Code

Retirement pay received in the Philippines, under specified conditions, is normally exempt from tax.

In particular, Section 32 of the Philippine Tax Code provides that the retirement pay received by an alien employee from his Philippine employer will generally be exempt from tax provided that he has served his employer for at least 10 years and he is at least 50 years old.

On the other hand, if you receive retirement pay from your home country, but you have decided to stay for good in the Philippines, then you may be able to bring the retirement benefits into the country, without being taxed.

Significantly, the Tax Code excludes from gross income retirement benefits received from foreign sources by aliens who come to permanently reside in the Philippines, as follows:

"The provisions of any existing law to the contrary notwithstanding, social security benefits, retirement gratuities, pensions and other similar benefits received by resident or nonresident citizens of the Philippines or aliens who come to reside permanently in the Philippines from foreign government agencies and other institutions, private or public."

In this regard, aliens who choose to reside permanently in the Philippines will not be taxed for any retirement pay or pension that they will be receiving from their home countries or from any external source, be it a foreign government or a private institution.

Retirement system

Executive Order No. 1037 created the Philippine Retirement Authority (PRA), otherwise known as the Philippine Retirement Park System. It is a government agency under the Office of the President mandated to develop and promote the Philippines as a retirement haven for foreign nationals.

The retirement program under the PRA is open to all foreign nationals (except those of countries with no diplomatic relations) and former Filipino citizens who are at least 35 years of age, here and abroad, who wish to acquire permanent and special resident status via the Special Resident Retirees Visa (SRRV), and who will comply with the program's deposit requirements, as follows:

- $50,000 for those aged 50 and above;
- $75,000 for those aged below 50 and at least 35;
- $1,500 for former/overseas Filipinos;
- $50,000 for those aged 35 but belongs to military of governments recognized by the Philippines, former members of diplomatic corps (at least three years in post), retired officers and employees of international organizations such as UN, WHO, etc.

Among the benefits that may be enjoyed by a member of the program or as a holder of SRRV are the following:

- Permanent resident status with multiple entry privileges through the SRRV;
- Exemption from customs duties and taxes for the importation of personal effects, appliances and household furniture worth $7,000 which must be availed of within 90 days upon issuance of SSRV;
- Exemption from exit clearance and reentry permits;
- Exemption from payment of travel tax provided the retiree has not stayed in the Philippines for more than one year from date of his last entry into the country;
- Conversion of the requisite dollar deposit into active investments, including purchase of condominium units;
- Interest on the foreign currency deposit is withdrawable anytime and payable to retirees in Philippine pesos;
- Foreign currency time deposit can be converted into Philippine peso deposit (interest, however, is subject to 20-percent withholding tax);
- Guaranteed repatriation of the requisite deposit including invested profits, capital gains and dividends accrued from investments upon compliance with BSP rules;
- Pensions and annuities remitted to the Philippines are tax-free.

The retiree may apply for enrolment to the retirement program at the Philippine Retirement Authority Office or at any of the Philippine embassies and consulates abroad.

As a consequence of acquiring the SRRV pursuant to the retirement program under EO No. 1037, the retiree's status for Philippine tax purposes is converted to that of a resident alien subject to Philippine income tax (BIR Ruling No. 012-89 dated Feb. 3,1998). Accordingly, the alien retiree is taxable only on his income derived from sources within the Philippines under Section 23(D) of the Tax Code.

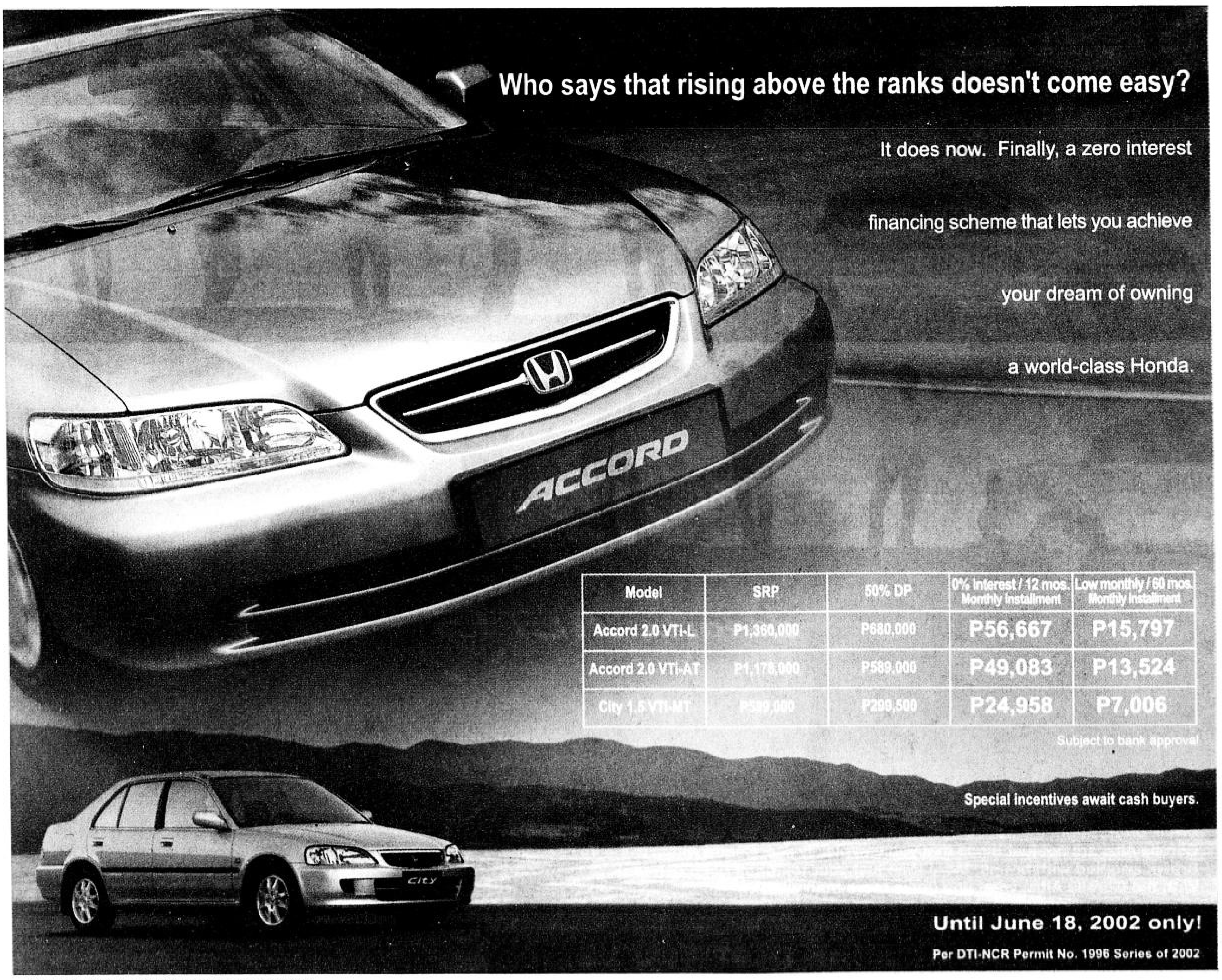
However, as discussed, the social security benefits, retirement gratuities, pensions and other similar benefits received by aliens who come to reside permanently in the Philippines from foreign government agencies and other institutions, private or public, are not subject to income tax (Sec. 32, Tax Code).

We note that such intention to permanently stay in the Philippines can be established by securing a permanent resident visa, such as the Special Resident Retiree's Visa under the Philippine Retirement Park System (ITAD Ruling No. 110-00 dated Aug. 23. 2000).

To recap, the retirement benefits given to aliens will be exempt from tax in the following instances:

1. If the foreigner is an employee in the Philippines and is receiving retirement benefits from his Philippine employer, the retirement benefits will be excluded from the alien employee's gross income provided that he is at least 50 years old and he has served his employer for 10 years;
2. If the foreigner comes to permanently reside in the Philippines and he is receiving retirement pay from foreign sources, the benefits will also be exempt from tax; and
3. If the alien has become a member of the Philippine Retirement Program by acquiring a Special Resident Retiree's Visa, he gets to avail of the privileges granted under the program, as above-discussed, in addition to the tax exemption of his retirement benefits received from abroad.

As they say, Pinoys just love to welcome foreigners. With warm hospitality plus a tax break to offer, don't you think the Philippines is indeed a perfect retirement getaway?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HONDA

Got ₱10M? Get a house that fried chicken built

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

ROBERT P. Ocampo, chief operating officer of Max's Franchising Inc., acknowledges the fact that the famous fried chicken house went into franchising a bit late.

The firm was already over 54 years old in 1998 when it decided to allow non-family members to own a Max's Restaurant.

But while Max's forayed late into franchising, Max's was quick to bring the restaurant outside Philippine shores. It was but appropriate for them to do this because its beginnings were prompted by the American presence in the country during World War II.

Max's has three company-owned branches in California—San Francisco, Glendale and San Diego. The firm is still studying the possibility of granting franchises in the Unites States.

In the Philippines, it has 25 franchisees.

What is unique about the franchisees, according to Ocampo, is that some of their franchisees have more than one.

"We have one with five, while others have three," he says.

A franchise costs P10 million if located in a mall. The minimum area is about 250 square meters. A free standing restaurant costs some P18 to P20 million and is about 600 sq. m.

Ocampo says a franchisee may be able to get back his investments in three years but he points out that the Harrison Plaza branch made its ROI (return on investments) in just nine months.

Max's boasts that it has better margins than Jollibee or McDonald's.

THE FIRST Max's Restaurant at Scout Tuason, Quezon City

OCAMPO: ROI in nine months

What is going for Max's is its product. Studies have shown that the most saleable items in fast-food outlets are fried chicken items. Filipinos just love fried chicken and over the past decades, Max's has created a good number of followers.

While it has expanded its menu, Ocampo says 70 percent of its revenues still come from the fried chicken.

The secret of the chicken lies in the marinade, which only a handful of people know, and the fact that Max's use fresh, chilled chicken—no frozen ones.

According to the company, its beginnings go as far back as 1945, when Maximo Gimenez, a Stanford-educated teacher, befriended some American soldiers who would always drop by his house for a drink or two.

The troops later insisted on paying for their drinks, prompting Gimenez to open a café.

The café served chicken, steak and drinks. His niece, Ruby, who managed the kitchen, created a special recipe for chicken that became an instant favorite. Word spread and soon, Max's Restaurant was born.

The older generation was not too keen on opening up to franchising but the third generation spearheaded the expansion.

The goal of the firm is to open 10 branches a year over the next three years to reach 100 by 2004.

It currently has 73 branches, 28 of which are franchisees.

Studies for new sites are done by Max's Inc. The franchisee is provided guidelines for site selection and lease negotiation and construction.

Max's Inc. will also provide the franchisee and eight members of its management team with four months of training.

The term of Max's Restaurant franchise is six years, with the right to renew for three additional terms of six years each for a total of 24 years, depending on the performance of the restaurant.

Swedish luxury yacht sales find tailwind

HENAN, Sweden—The luxury goods market is picking up after a year of economic gloom and the shock of the Sept. 11 attacks, and sales of up-market yachts are booming as the super-rich shop for new toys.

Swedish yacht constructors have ridden the storm and buyers from all over the world—including the British army—are beating a path to the island of Orust off the west coast to order sailing boats built by makers such as Hallberg-Rassy, Malo Yachts and Najad.

While other luxury goods firms, such as ritzy jewelry and fashion houses, have yet to produce hard evidence of the top-bracket rebound which many economists have predicted, Orust shipmakers' order books are fattening up.

Even before Sept. 11, investors lost billions of dollars last year on the US stock market. That, combined with the trauma of the attacks, may have pushed the wealthy to pour more of their money into solid, tangible investments.

"Stock market growth has been rather weak lately and we have lots of people who want to invest their money in something. And there are still many who have a lot of money to spend," Najad chief executive Fredrik Lundberg told Reuters.

All the comforts of home

And you need a lot of money to buy one of these sleek handmade sailing salons with mahogany-paneled interiors styled like a gentlemen's club.

Fitted with shower stalls, wine racks, fully equipped kitchens and deep, cushioned arm chairs—an owner of one of these yachts will not miss the comforts of home.

The smallest Najad model costs 130,600 euros ($119,500), excluding VAT and many interior features. The largest comes with a price tag of at least 576,900 euros ($527,800).

The typical buyer is a man in his 50s with a passion for sailing. He wants a boat comfortable enough to enjoy the good life and built well enough to sail the oceans.

"To buy a boat like this is a dream come true for many," said Hallberg-Rassy's CEO Magnus Rassy.

"One man walked in here with his wife to buy a yacht. She had never wanted a boat and said he'd have to choose between the boat or her. He returned two years later to buy a boat—with another wife on his arm," Rassy said.

Lundberg said building the yachts was a delicate craft.

"It's like a woodwork class, really. When our customers see how we work with every little detail they understand why the boats cost so much," he said.

Pent-up demand

"Directly after Sept. 11 orders were quite slow. But they picked up shortly after—it was like pent-up demand. Orders in December were the best in Najad's history," Lundberg said.

"It was like the Americans said: 'We're not going to let this break us,'" agreed Rassy.

Designed by Judel/Vrolijk & Co, the German-Dutch design agency behind two boats in the prestigious America's Cup competition, the Orust yachts cost as much second hand as new, making the craft a solid financial investment too.

The island's boat-building tradition dates back more than a thousand years. Archaeologists have found the remains of a 10,000-year-old boat on Orust and a famous Viking ship, "Ormen Lange," is said to have been built here.

Not only the wealthy are investing in extravagant Orust yachts. Najad recently delivered 11 boats to the British army, which uses the boats for team building training. *Reuters*

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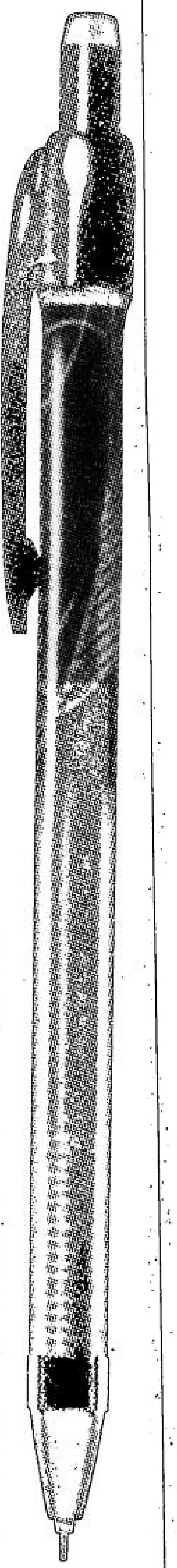

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Make sure goods fly off the shelves

From page C1

we think people can afford. If they want something at P100 ($2), we will sell it because it is still better to sell that at that price than to put everything in a box and store it," he adds.

Linea Italia has also invested in a point-of-sale system that allows it to track down what kind of goods sell faster and what goods are slow-moving.

Linea Italia has outlined plans to set up 10 more retail outlets over the next two years as the firm believes there is definitely a demand out there for affordable quality Italian goods, especially in the provinces.

"We are playing on volume discounts," he says.

Power Books

Reading books is considered a luxury in the Philippines where published materials can be quite expensive. This is the challenge faced by the Power Books Specialty Store, the high-end specialized bookstore of the National Bookstore chain, the biggest bookstore chain in the Philippines.

Power Books operations manager Maximo Gabriel Licauco acknowledges that its supply chain should be kept as efficient as possible to bring prices of its books to a level where the public can afford to part with their money.

Licauco says the process starts with the profile of the consumers because this will determine exactly what kind of books they would likely buy.

Power Books, thus, keeps a detailed list of its clients and a book club where they get regular feedback on the types of books that they want and actually purchase.

"We also have a system where we generate sales reports at the end of the day to determine the specific titles and the types of books that are sold. There are staff assigned to different categories so they also give feedback on the items that are sold fast and those that are not moving," Licauco explains.

From there, Power Books rides on the volume purchases of the National Bookstore chain to swing good deals with the publishers.

FEDERAL Hardware's shop layout

The new arrivals are displayed prominently to attract the buyers' interests, while some books that are not getting noticed are highlighted to call attention.

"The display is also very important and this can affect buying behavior. If we run out of stock we try to place an order to get the product as fast as possible either from the other branches or reordered from the publishers," Licauco says.

Power Books purchasing manager Vanessa Yu says the display techniques plus the close relationship with the loyal clientele help bring down inventory problems and ensure that the products are available if someone wants to purchase.

"We buy with our customers in mind so our inventory levels are very low. When we do have slow moving items we talk to the consumers and tell them that a particular book is good and they would really want to read it," Yu says.

Power Books collates and studies the buying pattern of the different stores at the end of the month and they modify their purchasing pattern accordingly.

Yu says Power Books' wide array of reading material is relatively cheap compared with that of the rest of Asia as the National Bookstore chain has developed a longer relationship with the publishers.

"The Philippines has been selling foreign language books for a long time so we have a longer and better relationship with the publishers compared with our counterparts in Asia. As a result, we get better discounts and deals with these publishers," Yu says.

These supply chain efficiencies are then passed on to consumers through lower prices.

"We cannot put our prices up too high because we believe that it is better to have a big margin on products that are sold than to have a big margin on products that no one will buy," Licauco adds.

Yu says there is a great demand for science fiction books in the tradition of the "Lord of the Rings" and "Harry Potter," although the older generation goes for contemporary literature and history books.

Art and architecture books are also popular in the three Power Books branches.

Federal

For the past 100 years or so, hardware stores in the Philippines have not changed much. These were usually small and dark with products haphazardly stored and displayed.

Federal Hardware Builder's Center bucked the trend when it came up with a fully air-conditioned hardware store chain that follows the trend of warehouse type hardware stores in the United States.

Being a newcomer has not stopped Federal from aggressively rolling out stores.

Its business proposition to the market is not only the convenience of looking at nuts and bolts in the convenience of an air-conditioned setting but also the low prices.

Glen Garret N. Leh, operations manager of Federal Hardware, says in an interview that many of Federal Hardware's products are priced lower than many of the competitors' products because of its relationships with a whole slew of suppliers, including those found on the Internet.

"We have different kinds of suppliers. We import ourselves about 20 to 30 percent of our products and the rest we get through exclusive distributors in the Philippines or the manufacturers themselves," Leh says.

They base the list of items to be purchased from the sales report; a system generated report from the different branches and from actual research not only of its network's performance but also of the competitors'.

"We go out and evaluate the market. We have research people who look at the competition, go to their stores and see what products are selling well. If we don't have it then we will buy it ourselves. This is our way of keeping in touch with the consumers," explains Federal branch development manager Kim G. Lukban.

Lukban says keeping a close watch on changing consumer behavior and studying actual sales reports allow Federal to keep excess products down to standard levels.

He says excess inventory is a headache in the warehouse business as there is limited space and this translates to added costs.

Federal Hardware boasts of a whole range of home building products, the most popular of which are the PVC doors, plumbing fixtures, electrical requirements, door jambs, nails and tiles.

"We analyze consumer behavior constantly to know exactly what people want. We don't have problems yet with inventory but we want to tolerate inventory at only one percent to 3 percent," Lukban explains.

Lukban admits that Federal does not have a scientific basis for computing the order levels of each product as they are still young. The rule of thumb is just to buy enough to last 1-1/2 months before the next order.

Japan's Sony out to claim victory in game battle

LOS ANGELES—For the video game industry, the game is either over, or just begun—depending on whether you listen to the No. 1 player or the two challengers battling to control a share of the booming $20-billion industry.

Something of a war of words was underway as market-leader Sony Corp., stalwart Nintendo Co. Ltd. and upstart Microsoft Corp. jostled for pride of place in the media spotlight trained on the industry's major trade show, the Electronic Entertainment Expo in Los Angeles.

Sony, which has already sold some 30 million of its PlayStation 2 consoles, took an early shot at rivals, declaring victory in a battle most analysts expect to rage for years.

"Officially, the console wars are over," Kaz Hirai, the president of Sony Computer Entertainment of America, said on Tuesday, to the cheers of a packed crowd at a movie studio in downtown Los Angeles.

Peter MacDougall, executive vice president of sales and marketing for Nintendo of America, drew cheers for GameCube loyalists at a separate event. "I think they know now the battle is on," he said of Sony.

Behind the talk is a serious point: the company that can demonstrate staying power and build a loyal and large audience of users can win over game publishers to work on its platform.

That's key because all three game box makers have been drawn into a price war in recent weeks, cutting console prices in a bet that the profits on more lucrative game software will more than make up for the discounts, analysts said.

Microsoft, the newest entrant, has been equally determined to show it has staying power, promising to invest $2 billion in the Xbox. "For us, this is about defining the future of digital entertainment," chief Xbox officer Robbie Bach said on Monday.

PS2 leads market

Sony's PlayStation 2 console is the global market leader having generated sales of 160 million units of software worldwide.

PS2 came out about a year before Microsoft's Xbox and Nintendo's GameCube machine, building a head start both in the United States and internationally.

Nintendo had a virtual stranglehold on the video game console business from the mid-1980s well into the 1990s. Its consoles fended off challenges from the likes of Sega Corp. and NEC Corp. and the company's name became synonymous with video gaming.

That changed in 1995, however, when Sony released the first PlayStation console and quickly began eating up market share.

Games for the PSX still crack the monthly top-20 game sales charts in the United States, while games for Nintendo's last system, the N64, which came out in 1996, have all but disappeared.

For companies like Nintendo and Sony that produce both hardware and software, the games are the real key, because while the hardware often sells at a loss, or break-even, margins are fatter and volumes higher for the software.

Price cuts spurred sales

Sony cut the US price of the PS2 to $199 from $299 on May 13, which was followed by an equal price cut by Microsoft on the Xbox two days later. Nintendo cut the price of the GameCube to $149 from $199 on Sunday.

Reuters

Recline. Relax. And read about life's ups and downs.

We've got everything on the changing economy, labor forces and market issues.
Not to mention most of the country's businessmen who listen to what we have to say.
BUSINESS INQUIRER
RN95850

Musings on the NY Ad Festivals

By Roger Pe
Contributor

NTSC
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NTSC 591702

"MAKE-UP" campaign won two golds.

IN 1996, Young and Rubicam, then Dentsu-Young & Rubicam Alcantara, gave the Philippines one of its brightest moments in advertising by winning the country's first gold in a major international award show.

The agency's "Make-Up" television campaign against child abuse won an unprecedented two golds from the New York International Advertising Festivals—one in the competition's public service category and another in the United Nation's Department of Public Information (UNDPI). The latter honors public service advertising campaigns that reflect issues of concern to the United Nation such as health, human rights, exploitation of children, racial discrimination, trafficking of women, literacy, fight against poverty, sustainable development and the environment.

The New York Festivals
MAGAZINE, POSTER, OUTDOOR, TRANSIT

THE NEW York Festivals Book immortalizes the world's best ads.

All finalists in the New York Festivals are eligible to compete for this prestigious award whose annual winner is widely broadcast around the globe by the bible of advertising, the Advertising Age.

The ad showed a Filipino girl being made-up on screen by an unseen adult to look like a prostitute.

The award-winning commercial, now immortalized in the New York Festivals Book of The World's Best Work was conceived by Bobby Ulili, directed by Angelo Madrid and produced by Studio Claudio.

In 1998, McCann-Erickson, the country's biggest ad agency, became the second Philippine ad agency to win a gold in the New York Festivals. It won critical acclaim for its dramatic "Tubo" (Faucet) "Tulo" (Droplet) and "Mantsa" (Stain) campaign against sexually transmitted diseases. The TV ad series made for Reachout AIDS Foundation was conceptualized by Jack Sotto, Rany Mercado, Baong Abesamis, Carmè Rosal, and directed by Onat Diaz.

Other Philippine agencies which have won medals and recognition from the New York Festivals are Leo Burnett, Ace-Saatchi & Saatchi, DDB Philippines, Jimenez D'Arcy, J. Walter Thompson, Ogilvy & Mather, BBDO-Guerrero/Ortega, Lowe Worldwide and Basic Advertising.

For over 49 years, the New York Festivals has honored excellence in communications media. Founded in 1957 as an in

MUSINGS/ C7

Judging the world's best print ads

By David Guerrero
Contributor

THE Aspen Meadows Resort hotel and conference centre is a commercials-free zone. It is 7,000 feet above sea level and surrounded by snow-capped mountains.

A note in the room warns you to watch out for grizzly bears roaming the grounds. I hate to say it, but the only likely pollution, are the vast quantities of ads waiting for us to judge.

First morning: We split into three groups to tackle the work.

It is split up into manageable little piles of ads—about 20-30 in a stack. No big advantage in proofing stuff up to A2 or A1 since you will have to pick it up anyway. Also, the ads are randomly mixed up—not by category. The point as Andrew Jaffe puts it is "not to find a good 'car ad' but a good ad. Period."

Deserving ads

Steve Simpson, our jury chair had also told us not to judge as we would in a "local show" (we suddenly feel so provincial) but to put stuff forward that is truly deserving of a Clio. Tough call indeed.

With this kind of criteria you are of course voting a lot of stuff "out." In fact you start to wish you could vote some stuff "double-out."

Among these were items using Hitler, the Ku Klux Klan, and blue, shrunken penises. (Although if they had all been in the same ad it might have been OK.)

Then you come across something that looks vaguely familiar. It's not the worst thing you've seen but it's not exactly saying "vote for me." Eventually you realize it's saying "abstain." You entered it. And there you are about to deny it! Shame on you! Move on.

Innovative

Day two: Chat in the coffee break with Ehr Rey from DM9/DDB, Brazil. He looks very Asian and I wonder why. Apparently he moved with his family from Taiwan at the age of 6. I tell him he should come and judge an Asian awards show. For the meantime, I try to subtly prise away some of their fiendish award-winning secrets.

A lot of the "innovative" stuff had photography purporting to show the reactions of passers-by to the work. Some of it looked so staged we started saying "That's the copywriter! And the art director's holding the camera!" The occasional campaign for "Pet Funeral Services" provoked outright laughter.

After we're done I catch up with Michael Boychuck of Wongdoody. He agonized as we all have about great ideas that were buried in poor art direction. (And, eventually, come to the conclusion that they should for the most part not go through.) But he has also gone back and double-checked all his first round selections and "weeded about half of them out." He goes on: "I just imagined seeing them printed in the book and saying 'how did that get in there.'" Well exactly. I now wonder if I've been too lenient.

Shortlist

Day three: The whole 'integrated' category hasn't captured the imagination of the agency world. This is a shame since it probably does the most to turn on clients. This is also a category that would resist scamming since so much effort has to be made. Nevertheless we reluctantly vote a few onto the shortlist. And I imagine that's where most of them will end up.

The evening's a lot brighter though with an Italian dinner followed up by a doubles tournament at pool. Pedro from Portugal turns out to be a Tom Cruise level hustler on the table. We all vow not to vote for any Portuguese work tomorrow. (Or we would do if we had any clue which it was.)

Fourth day: The shortlist is out. And so are most of our ads. At least I can't blame the judges. Anyway there's no time to dwell on it because we're now faced with the more difficult task of ranking each one on a scale from one to 10. Anything I think should definitely get a gong I give a seven. I save my "8"s' for the greats. For me they include the Club 18-30 stuff. The Guinness posters. And the Guinness Rugby poster.

Final day: The "double-boiled" shortlist is in front of us. Now we only get to see the top 25 percent of ads that have been selected. The rest we will have to call back from the pile. We are about to complain—out of habit more than anything else—when the Clio staff just smile knowingly and say "we don't think you'll need to see much more than that . . ."

It soon becomes obvious though that calling anything back from the pile rarely results in anything more than a bronze. After a while we stop calling so much stuff back.

After four days of quiet deliberation everyone starts talking. And since this is a roomful of creative directors once people get started they can't stop. The only time anyone does stop in fact is when they have to leave the room. Not to go to the bathroom—since everyone seems to have given their bodily functions the day off—but when one of your ads comes up for a vote.

FedEx ad

As it happens the first ad on the list is the FedEx "Box." What that means is that it has come out top of the anonymous voting and in theory is "Best of Show." I have no expectations of that happening. But anyway it's a good start. However, after about 10 minutes out of the room, I start to get a bit nervous. Not so much about the fate of the ad—but more that they've just forgotten I'm out there and have moved on to judging the rest of the show. I have a vision of still being outside at lunchtime when everyone's congratulating each other on the results.

Anyway, after what seems like an eternity they do call me back and I am quietly delighted to come back and see it has a Gold—just.

After a short while I have to get up again when our Adidas "Fence" ad comes up for a vote. This time I return to a shortlist. And just one vote short of a bronze.

Awards

So follows a pattern whereby anyone who gets up ends up with a bad result. Brazil, United States, Germany, UK. Everyone starts thinking that leaving the room is obviously the kiss of death for any ad.

The pattern is broken when

JUDGING/ C7

Japan . . .

From page C2

denly had a wider range of movies to choose from.

"People living in major outlying cities are unmistakably going out to watch movies more now because of multiplexes," Warner Mycal Corp., Japan's biggest multiplex operator, said in a recent report.

Last year, attendance in Japan reached 163 million, up from 125 million in 1992, just before the first multiplex was built.

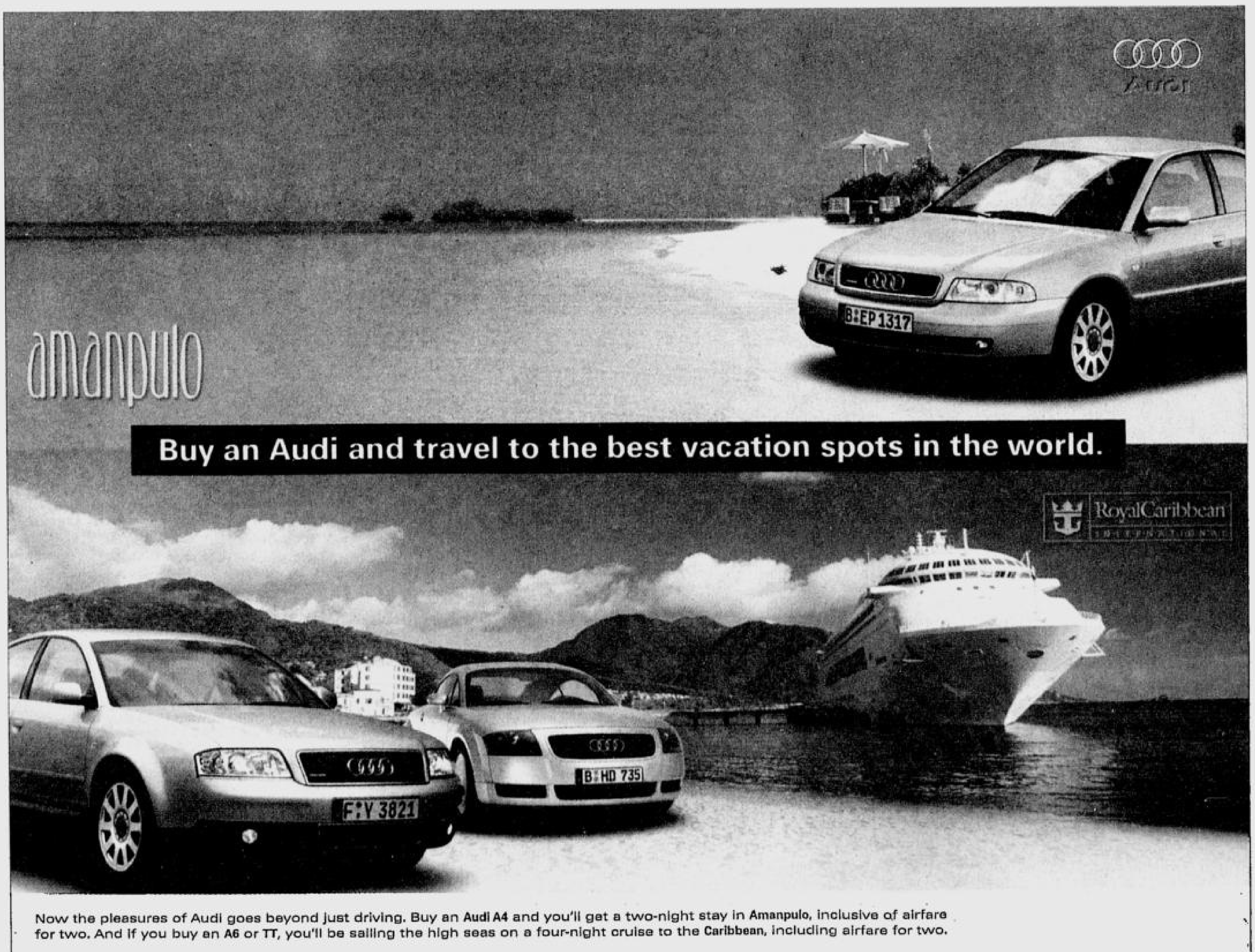
The number of screens last year hit 2,585, and nearly half of them were in multiplexes. In 1992, there were only 1,744 screens.

"There is no doubt that in a few years we will be back up to the 1970s level of 3,000 screens and attendance of 200 million," the Warner Mycal report said.

Snail's pace

Japan's movie market is Hollywood's second-largest in the world by revenue, but it has fewer screens and people here go to watch films less often than in any other major industrialized country.

In 1999, Japan had one screen for every 57,046 people, compared with one for every 7,334 in the United States. Japanese went to the movies an average 1.3 times last year, compared with 5.3 times for Americans. Industry executives placed high hopes on multiplexes. *Reuters*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Now you do not only have one, but two unmatched offers like no other: the most luxurious car and the ultimate paradise experience.

To test drive an Audi and to partake these pleasures, visit the Audi showroom now.

Promo period is from May 18 to June 18, 2002.
Availment of trips to Amanpulo and Caribbean is until August 31, 2002.
Offer is valid on Suggested Retail Price only.

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People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor

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'White ants' gone for good

OUR COUNTRY is a terrific breeding ground for subterranean termites; why, we even have a species named after us—the Philippine Milk termites or "white ants". They are found to be the most tolerant to chemical treatment, are very voracious, and can thrive even in high-rises. Worse, they have rendered many attempts at termite proofing quite unsuccessful.

Termite infestation is a plague that damages millions of houses the world over. Termites surreptitiously work round-the-clock, destroying homes and properties from inside the wood, and the only time you'll see evidence of their work is when a major structure in your home gives way.

Conventional termiticides create a chemical barrier around the house, but the property may be in trouble if the barrier is disrupted or breaks down. Fortunately, there is now an anti-termite system that can effectively stop the destruction and prevent it from ever occurring. US-based leader Dow AgroSciences developed Sentricon System, a revolutionary technology that wipes out entire termite colonies and protects against future termite invasion.

It takes advantage of natural termite behavior—worker termites forage all over, constantly searching for wood to feed the whole colony. When they find food, like the monitoring device in Sentricon station, they leave special scent trails to summon their nestmates back to the food source. The monitoring device is then being replaced by bait that contains hexaflumuron, a substance that stops the molting process so termites can't grow. In time, all members of the termite colony will die. After the colony is eliminated, Sentricon technicians will continue to inspect your home and property to prevent renewed termite attacks.

Hexaflumuron is the first pest control product in the United States to receive "fast track" registration from the Environmental Protection Agency in the new "Reduced Pesticide Risk" category. Sentricon was also awarded by the Clinton administration the US Presidential Green Chemistry Award for its commitment to keep the environment safe.

Moreover, the technology is odorless, non-disruptive (not likely to disturb landscaping and no need to drill through the floor or foundation), and safe (all Sentricon stations have secure, child-resistant caps), which make Sentricon excellent for homes and other sensitive places like hospitals, food establishments, schools, libraries, clubhouses, hotels, shopping centers, warehouses and museums.

As a matter of fact, Sentricon is the technology that protects the US Statue of Liberty, some Philippine historical sites, and many homes in other Asian and European countries.

For your peace of mind, call (32)867-9797.

SMART RECOGNIZES COURIERS OF 2001

In recognition of outstanding performances of its courier and postal service providers and as an incentive for better customer services delivery, Smart Communications Inc held the Smart Best Courier of the Year Award 2001. Winning the award for the Big Area Category (for services in several large geographic areas) was Safefreight Services, while Zip Business Services won in the Small Area Category. Shown is Michelle Descallar (second from left), general manager of Zip Business Services and Mario Codila, proprietor of Safefreight Services (second from right) with their plaques of recognition. With them are Ramoncito Fernandez, Smart administration materials management division head (extreme right) and Arnold A. Cababatan, Smart administration materials management division manager for billing.

3M PROMOTES QUALITY INDOOR AIR

James Schmidt, international marketing manager of 3M's construction and home improvement market for the Asia-Pacific, visited the country recently to work with local subsidiaries and help achieve winning strategies for the 3M Philippines business. During his visit Schmidt dropped in on different retail hardware and store outlets in Metro Manila to observe how 3M Filtrete high-efficiency aircon filters that work to achieve healthy indoor air was doing. Here, James Schmidt and Crispina Amen, 3M Philippines division manager of its home care division, discuss ways of promoting awareness of indoor air pollution through store displays and special activities.

Hope for troubled marriages

MARRIED couples who need healing in their relationship can seek help from a Retrouvaille weekend scheduled from June 14 to 16 at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Barangay San Jose (near San Pablo Seminary), Tagaytay City.

A Catholic ministry, Retrouvaille (French for rediscovery) is a program designed to help heal and renew stressed, troubled and hurting marriages.

It is for married couples who feel unfulfilled in, or disillusioned with, their marriages and are resolved to put the past behind and work at rediscovering each other in a new and positive way.

Fr. David Clay of the Columban House, Singalong, Manila, is the spiritual director of Retrouvaille. He and three couples who have experienced the Retrouvaille program will give talks during the weekend.

The Retrouvaille program consists of a three-day weekend starting Friday evening and ending on Sunday afternoon, and six follow-up Saturday afternoon sessions in Metro Manila.

Couples who want more information on the program or who wish to register for the June 14 weekend may call Fr. David Clay at 523-3361 or 0918-9020511, Tom and Ruby del Castillo at 931-8413 and 932-3750, Ike and Flor Carlos at 718-0689, Ding and Belen Bauza at 776-4413, Tessie Reyes at 800-5255 (between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) or 0917-5388970, and Joe and Ting Jimenez at 927-3905 (after 7 p.m.).

Product FILES

Powerful perimeter protection

A POWERFUL perimeter protection is your first-level security and is probably your most important line of defense against burglary or intrusion. Most people would want to foil any attempt even before a burglar sets foot inside your homes.

Most conventional sensors, however, get "detected" first by the burglar. Sequtech Corp., the country's emerging leader in security systems, provides the most reliable solution for perimeter protection with the VMX Series made by Visonic Ltd—the world's leading manufacturer of high-tech security systems.

The VMX series uses dual photoelectric beams that can effectively cover ten times the normal rated outdoor distance. Unlike ordinary beams that emit light, which forewarns intruders, VMX photoelectric beams are invisible, and so the intruder freely moves about without knowing that his presence had already been detected.

Moreover, the VMX series is easy to install and is equipped with protection circuitry against lightning. The detectors can be set to fit existing environmental conditions to prevent false alarms.

There are two models to choose from: the VMX-150, which covers 165 feet and 70 feet outdoors. For longer reach, the VMX-300 covers 330 feet indoors and 130 feet outdoors.

For product inquiries, call Sequtech Corp. at 845-3444.

AN INTIMATE AFFAIR

Intimate feminine napkin was recently launched at the Edsa Shangrila Hotel with select guests from the retail industry and some media friends. Intimate feminine napkin is designed for a woman's comfort and confidence, to prevent awkward accidents. Present during the launch were (seated from left) Glenn Hernandez, Getz Bros. Phils. president, Carol Rodriguez, category manager of Getz Bros, and Bobby Caballero, president of Caballero Worldwide Partners. Standing from left are Totie Ignacio, PR manager of Caballero Advertising, Ed Mauricio, division manager of Getz Bros.; Marivic Gonzales, VP for administration, Caballero Advertising, Joan Cebricos, VP for account services, Caballero Advertising, and Ramon Cruz, business development manager, Getz Bros. Intimate feminine napkin is now available at all retail outlets nationwide, and is exclusively marketed by Getz Bros. Phils. Inc.

BITS Clips

San Mig's toast to summer

EXPECT barrels of fun, food and exciting activities and, of course, overflowing ice-cold San Miguel Beer as more "Sarap to Sundown Summer 2002" parties happen as May winds up. A one-of-a-kind "SMB Summer Fiesta" happens in Balanghai, Butuan City from May 24 to 26, while beach bums will have the time of their lives partying no end at the Cebu Beach Club in Cebu on May 25. An array of "SMB Summer Fiesta" activities then await revelers in the "Pasayahan sa Lucena" in Quezon from May 27 to 30, the "Kaogma" in Naga from May 28 to 30, and the "Magayon" in Legaspi for the whole month of May. Log on to smbsaraptosundown.pinoycentral.com for more updates.

Sale at Theosophical Bookstore

UNTIL MAY 26, Theosophical Bookstore will have its first book sale of the year. Don't miss the chance to purchase hard-to-find books at discounted and special prices, from 20 to 50 percent off. The back issues of Theosophical Digest sells for only P25 each.

Marketing guru keynotes seminar

MARKETING author, Agora Awardee and former Philippine Marketing Association national president Josiah Go will be the keynote speaker of Mansmith and Fielders Inc's seminar "3rd Implementing Marketing Strategies: From Plan to Performance" on May 28 to 30 at the Mandarin Hotel. This will discuss how to convert a marketing plan into the desired marketing performance. The conference will show how marketers can use marketing implementation to sustain their competitive advantage in the fast-paced, often changing marketing environment through five key modules. A combination of interactive lectures and workshops that range from group discussions to role plays will also be used. Call Mansmith and Fielders at 723-6671 or 722-2318.

MISS MAKATI SEARCH TODAY

Now on its 13th year, the Search for Miss Makati continues its quest for the lady who will epitomize the beauty, intelligence and confidence of today's upbeat women. Coronation night is slated Friday, May 24, 7 p.m. at the Ballroom of Mandarin Oriental Manila. A contract signing was held between the organizers of Miss Makati and some of the major sponsors. Signing the contract are (from left) Gener Gozum, who will provide the long gowns, Charisse Chuidan, director of communications of Mandarin Hotel, the official residence of the candidates, Jackie Maniquis, project coordinator, and Linda Orro, vice president of finance of Destiny Cable, the official TV station of the pageant. Witnessing the signing are (from left) Macky Marcos, creative head of the media production of Destiny Cable Inc., Sharon Millan, Miss Tourism 2001, Elizabeth Mae Cruz, Miss Makati 2001, and

SUN LIFE FINANCIAL AT MAGAYON FEST

Bicol's month-long celebration of the Magayon Festival opened May 1 with a concert featuring its very own Lou Bonnevie. Bonnevie, who appeared courtesy of Sun Life Financial, proved herself as captivating a performer today as when she rocked the music scene of the '80s. Shown is Sun Life of Canada (Philippines) Inc. vice president for sales and marketing Raoul Littaua shaking hands with the singer after signing the agreement. Sun Life's support to Bicol's Magayon Festival extends to is biggest and much-awaited event, the coronation of Bb. Magayon 2002 today, May 24. Aside from bringing home the Bb. Magayon 2002 crown, Bicol's beauties will also have the chance to become Ms Sun Milady 2002.

China Bank net income up nearly 55%

CHINA BANKING Corp. (China Bank) posted an audited net income of P1.016 billion for 2001, up by 54.9 percent from the P656-million net income in 2000. The improvement was attributed primarily to government securities, investments and trading gains. The bank's resulting return on equity reached 8.26 percent compared to 5.70 percent for 2001.

The bank also continued to strengthen its provisioning by setting aside P802 million in reserves during the period. Total loan loss reserves reached P3 billion for an NPL coverage ratio of 57.5 percent. Actual NPL ratio stood at 13.13 percent compared to the industry ratio of 17.35 percent.

At the end of the 4th quarter, China Bank's total resources stood at P83 billion, 25.6 percent higher than the year-ago level of P66 billion. It is also one of the best-capitalized banks in the industry with total capital funds of P12.8 billion and a capital adequacy ratio of 21.9 percent. Total deposits stood at P61 billion.

China Bank has 138 branches nationwide and 156 ATMs, with many off-branch locations in strategic sites such as shopping malls.

The bank's credit rating was recently affirmed by Cyprus-based Capital Intelligence credit rating agency, with a domestic strength rating of BB and a stable outlook.

Discover Australia with Qantas

BODY & SOUL PROMO

Body & Soul Inc. recently awarded the grand prize for the Australia promo, which was participated in by all Shoemart's Watsons outlets. The prize includes two roundtrip tickets to Australia with hotel accommodation, a P25,000 pocket money and P15,000 worth of Body & Soul products. The promo was co-presented by Qantas Airways. Shown from left are Philippe Gratelle, business development manager of Body & Soul, Grace Lee Rivera, SAVP-operations for Watsons, movie and TV personalities Evangeline Pascual and Glydel Mercado, winner Pablita Migriño, Qantas Airways officers Gem Feliciano and Lizette Rebanal. The awarding was held at Body & Soul's Watsons outlet in Megamall recently.

Vigan's 40-year-old bibingka draws loyal subjects

**By Frank Cimatu
and Leoncio Balbin Jr.**
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

VIGAN CITY—"Selling like hotcakes" seems an understatement in some days at the Tongson's Royal Bibingka in the heart of this city.

In this little shop at the corner, local and foreign tourists line up to sample the *bibingka* (rice cake) made in 30 minutes. The freshly baked delicacies are packed in boxes and whisked to one of the tourists waiting outside.

Norma Peredo, Tongson's supervisor, said the store receives about 200 to 500 orders during the summer and about 1,000 during the Christmas season. With only one *hurno* (wooden kiln) and one large oven, it is literally a hothouse at the shop.

Bibingka is a common delicacy in North Luzon. Former President Fidel Ramos even made the *bibingka* his metaphor for government service, talking about heat from the top and the bottom to come up with the most delectable pie.

But with marketing savvy, Tongson's has become the main player in the game that now involves several players.

Ninety-nine-year old Matilde Tongson started her business 40 years ago, initially serving her delicacy to her friends and relatives.

Placing "royal" in *bibingka* was also an inspired marketing move although many food historians would say that the "Royal Bibingka" came from Ilocos Norte.

PHOTO BY LEONCIO BALBIN

FOR royalty and presidents.

This *bibingka* has glutinous rice flour, butter, sugar, condensed milk, egg yolk, vanilla, coconut milk, lemon rind and coconut cream. This is steamed for 15 minutes and then topped with coconut milk, vanilla, condensed milk, cheese and shortening before the whole pie is baked for 20 minutes.

Although Tongson declined to divulge her own recipe, it was she who first thought of selling the *bibingka* in boxes just like pizza. From the initial P15 a box, she now sells them for P75 each.

Having a shop in the town's *centro* (business center), close to what is now called the Heritage Village of Vigan, also helped bring in sales.

She also set up a store for those who wanted to buy other Vigan delicacies like *longganiza* (meat sausage), *chichacorn* (corn snack) and *tinubong* (rice pudding in bamboo nodes).

Now, no visit to Vigan is complete without boxes of Tongson's *bibingka*.

Other *bibingka* shops have also followed Tongson's move. Among these are "Sikatuna's Bibingka" and "Mom's Bibingka," both in Vigan, and the "Tri-Sister" in nearby Bantay town.

Rodrigo Arde of "Mom's Bibingka" built his shop around the recipe of his mother, Alejandra.

According to Eliza Arde, Rodrigo's wife, the ingredients include cooked coconut, rice flour, margarine, sugar and evaporated milk. These ingredients are combined and baked for an hour before the pie is sprinkled with grated cheese.

With P10,000 in capital in 1978, Arde has gone a long way and made "Mom's Bibingka" among the most sought after products in the province. Arde has also invested in a resort on the eastern side of the city.

"The business took off well that's why I was immediately able to pay my loan," Arde said.

Tongson, meanwhile, has set up a branch in Manila, which is being managed by her son Florencio.

Peredo said they have also experimented on the freeze-dried *bibingka* for those who want to bring the product to the United States and other countries.

A typical "Royal Bibingka" lasts for three days while a frozen *bibingka* can last for a week.

"Because all our *bibingka* are sold before we can freeze them, we had no time to test our frozen *bibingka*. But last December, we tried selling them and fortunately, no one complained," Peredo said.

Tongson has also begun selling mini-*bibingka* at P5 each for those in a hurry to eat their rice cakes.

Judging the world's best print ads

From page C5

DM9'sEhr starts getting some Silvers and Bronzes for his many ads.

One particular point of contention is the UK Club 18-30 work with the not-so-innocent pictures of people having fun at the beach. Half the room loves it, including me.

On the other hand, two of the judges hate it with a passion. Although they admit that it's perfect for both the target audience and the brand. Hmmm. Anyway, they have a definite point of view about why they don't want to reward it that much. It ends up a Silver.

Conversely, as it happens, another judge thinks some work for a Home Decorating website is perfect for its mid-America homemaker audience. It gets nowhere. There's no denying it is easier to get excited about group sex than flock wallpaper.

Then there's a campaign for a Brazilian sperm bank, which completely divides the room on geographical grounds. The idea is babies holding copies of Playboy-type magazines with the line: Give me a hand so I can be born.

RP ad

All the Latin Americans think it's great, noone else does. Maybe it lost something in the translation.

As if to dent any suggestion of nationalism, Pedro Bidarra of BBDO Portugal pulls back an ad "from a man I hate but which won a Gold at Cannes for Portugal." I love his honesty. In fact it's better than the ad which still ends up with nothing.

The last remaining work from the Philippines is in "innovative media." It is, first and foremost, a great idea. (So I have no trouble voting for it!) The agency bought the back of the Mandarin Hotel key cards for the Economist and placed the line: "Opens doors" on it. Luckily, Nick Bell is also fan and it gets a Silver—the country's first.

Somewhat incredibly—for me, at least – the majority of the Gold winners are from Asia. Three for Guinness. Two for FedEx. One for Campaign Brief Asia. There's also a striking campaign from London for the Harvey Nichol's sale, which I haven't taken much notice of it until now. It uses stunning fashion photography to tell the tale of women showing the scars of having to fight their way through to all the good stuff.

Grand Clio

We know that the crunch will come soon. In fact, it comes sooner than expected. Two of the judges want a revote on all the Golds. Starting with FedEx!

I have to leave the room. While I'm out, I get told later, they are nearly downgraded to shortlist and bronze! But after long debate—which came down to if we're going to revote those then we have to revote everything—I came back and nothing has changed.

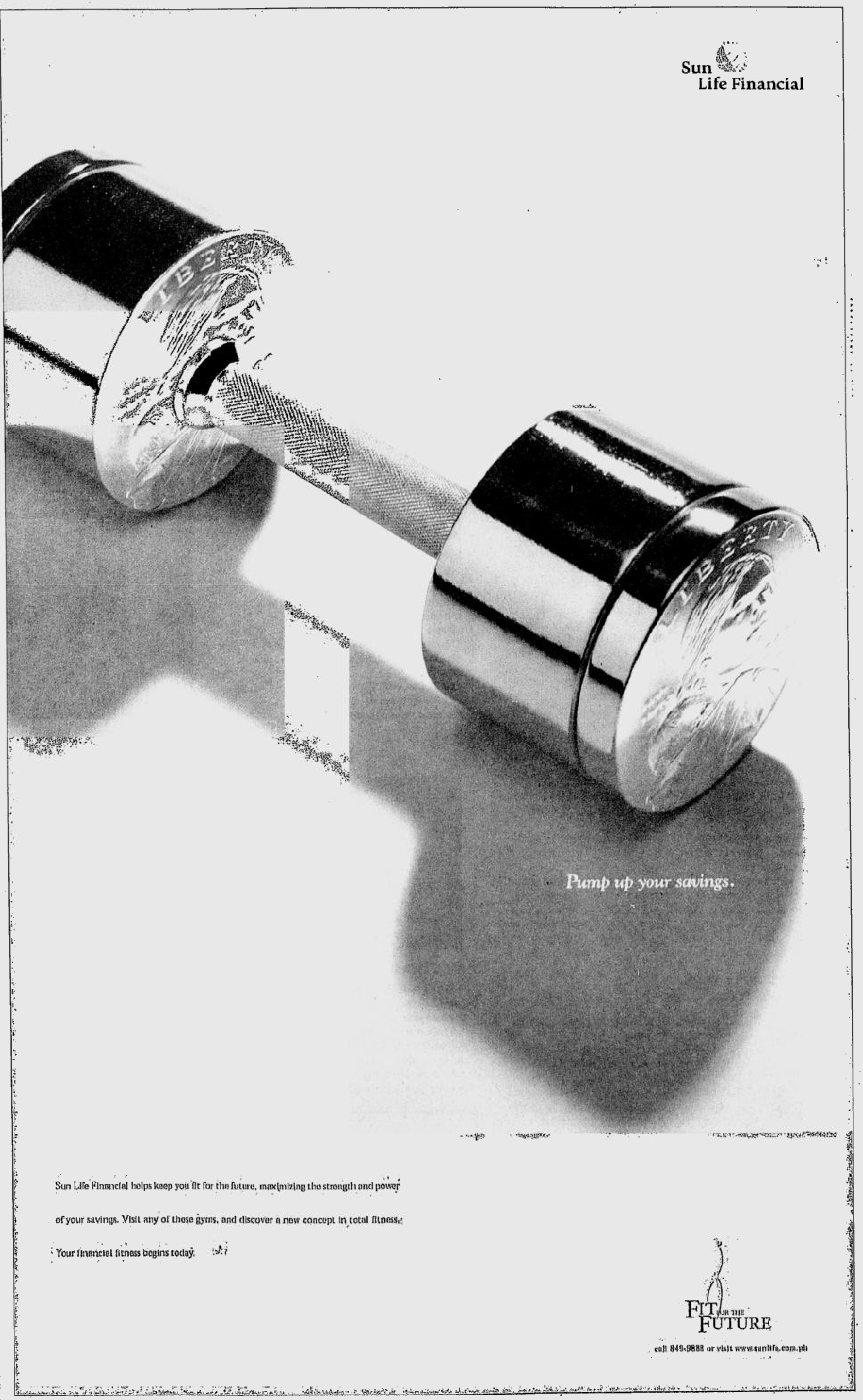
It was something of a relief then to see Harvey Nichols get the Grand Clio—almost unanimously. The old argument about it being 'the kind of brief people get every day' still held good. And we all set off in search of a drink. Compared to the revote, the grizzly bears don't seem that scary now.

Musings on the NY Ad Festivals

From page C5

ternational awards competition designed primarily to reward outstanding achievements in non-broadcast media, the event has experienced wide expansion and acceptance.

From 1,000 entries in 1979 to more than 16,000 entries in all media in 2001, the competition has become one of the world's major ad competitions whose judges are carefully selected from across the globe. It is celebrating its 45th anniversary this year with the Creative Guild as its official representative and affiliate in the Philippines.



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Messages

I EXTEND my cordial greetings to the management and staff of Electrolux Philippines, Inc. and the Electrolux Group.

Your presence is vital to our country's economic growth. The time, money and effort that you invested are gestures of your confidence in the economic, social and political stability of our country. Your investment also recognizes the competence, reliability and diligence of the Filipino workers.

Let us continue to work together in reinforcing our aspirations for development, prosperity and a better life for the Filipino people.

Congratulations and mabuhay!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

OUR warmest greetings to Electrolux Philippines, Inc. and the whole Electrolux Group on the Re-Introduction and Re-Entry of Electrolux Products and Services in the Philippine Market on May 24, 2002 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

It is heartening to note that a signature international company like the Electrolux Group – which is the market leader in Europe and No. 3 in the U.S. (through Frigidaire Home Products) and has a presence in more than 150 countries all over the world – considers the Philippines as a priority for its global expansion program, given our growing market and strategic location.

Indeed, we welcome the company's re-entry into the local market after its absence of almost four years since 1998. We are confident that the company's renewed participation in the country would translate into contributions to investment generation, creation of employment opportunities for hundreds of Filipinos, and the promotion of consumer welfare – considering that Filipino consumers would be given access to top quality, state-of-the-art Electrolux appliances, thereby widening their available options in the local market.

We definitely look forward to the integration and success of Electrolux in Philippine business as this would not only serve as a shining illustration of what we can achieve through our collaboration in trade, investments and technology, but also send a strong signal of confidence to the overseas business community that the Philippines is, indeed, a feasible platform for overseas operations.

We take this opportunity to convey our best wishes for success to Electrolux and may your re-entry serve to benefit your clientele in both the business and household sectors of the Philippines.

Mabuhay!

MAR ROXAS
Secretary
Department of Trade and Industry

Greetings to Electrolux Philippines, Inc!

The Electrolux Group was founded more than 80 years ago and has grown during the last decades through acquisitions from a mid-size Swedish company to the leading Appliance Company in the world. It also landed a position on Forbes 500 list with USD 14 billion in sales turnover. We are present in 150 countries, producing 55 million appliances per annum.

We are the market leader in Europe with such brands as Electrolux, Zanussi and AEG. In the United States, through our key brands Frigidaire and Eureka, we have been able to reach the No.3 position.

During the last 10 years, Electrolux has moved aggressively into Asia Pacific. Through acquisitions, Electrolux was able to make inroads in China, India, and Australia. In East Asia, the Group has established presence in the household appliance sector which include vacuum cleaners, washing machines, cooking appliances and refrigerators in markets like Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, Hong Kong, and Korea.

Our efforts have been rewarded as we are now the No.1 in European front-loaded washers and we are No.2 in the Southeast Asian market in the vacuum cleaners and cooking appliances sector.

The Philippines is a priority in the Group's expansion in the Asian region, given the country's size, its growing market and strategic location.

There will be many exciting offerings that Electrolux Philippines will be delivering in the near future, and we hope that you will support our efforts in providing the Philippine market with a choice that has been tagged "The World's No. 1 Choice" by more than 150 countries worldwide.

Thank you! Mabuhay!

(Sgd) **FREDRIK RAMEN**
President, Electrolux East Asia

It is my great pleasure to present to you Electrolux Philippines, Inc.

As a company, Electrolux is known as the world's largest producer of home appliances. We develop, design, manufacture, market and provide after sales service to our customers in more countries than any other companies.

The establishment of an Electrolux affiliated company in the Philippines is the Group's strategic move and a long-term commitment to the country's home appliances market. This year, we will offer 160 jobs to Filipinos and by the end of 2003 we will employ approximately 270 Filipinos.

Our high quality product and contemporary design match Filipinos characteristics.

As a trademark owner, we would like to build up our brand here, and we will introduce only high quality products suitable to local conditions.

We are hoping to apply the global success we have achieved in other markets in the Philippines market. We are also set to build up infrastructure and well-trained staff to support our business partners and their customers.

Our two strong brands, Electrolux and White-Westinghouse will be at the forefront of our aim to achieve our mission in the country. We hope that our partnership with the Filipino people will be a long-term and fruitful endeavor.

Mabuhay!

(Sgd) **VICHAI LORATTAWOULT**
President, Electrolux Philippines, Inc.

White-Westinghouse — A Prestigious Partnership
Electrolux — A Prestigious Partnership

Electrolux Phils. Inc. showcases innovative products during Trade Launch

24 May 2002, EDSA Shangri-La Mandaluyong City—Electrolux Philippines Inc., will present a showcase of its innovative products specially designed for the Filipino consumer during their Trade Launch called. "Prestigious Partnerships."

The event also marks the beginning of a new chapter for Electrolux and White Westinghouse appliances in the Philippines, as it opened its doors to major retailers in the country. During the event, formal tie-ups with major retail sellers will be strengthened, enabling Electrolux Philippines, Inc. to offer its wide variety of home appliances in accessible locations nationwide to Filipino customers. This major development marks the transition of the company from a direct-seller to a prestigious global consumer durables firm that markets its products at retail outlets where the consumer has more accessibility and convenience.

The product demonstrations held during the event features high quality and trusted products that are geared towards local requirements and conditions. Features such as power saving and environmentally safe attributes encased in elegant and sturdy exteriors that will fit the most discriminating Filipino household are showcased in seven (7) Product Category Exhibit units. But these are just for starters. Electrolux promises to deliver the future of appliances to the Filipino consumer in the coming years.

An exciting campaign to present to the public the breakthrough Electrolux and White Westinghouse products will soon unfold.

Last month, Electrolux Philippines, Inc. launched its local office at the 7/F King's Court I Building, 2129 Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) in Makati City. The expansion into the Philippines, including the partnership with appliances retailers, is part of Electrolux Group's mission to be "The World's No. 1 Choice." To achieve this mission, Electrolux Philippines is set to heavily invest in the country.

Electrolux is the biggest producer of home appliances. It develops, designs, manufactures, markets and services appliances in more countries than any other company. Electrolux is among the largest private employers in the world with about 90,000 employees. Every year, consumers in more than 150 countries buy more than 55 million appliances sold under the Group's various brands. Last year's figures alone amounted to USD14 billion in group sales.

Electrolux is a market leader in Europe, and is No.3 in the US through Frigidaire Home products. The Electrolux Group is also a major player in a number of Asian countries such as India, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and Hong Kong.

White-Westing

WHITE-WESTINGHOUSE SINGLE DOOR REF

- With a **ONE-TOUCH QUICK DEFROST** button, which is a splash-free system that collects defrosted water into the drain pan and once defrosting is finish ref automatically starts.
- Has a **WIDER BODY** compared to refs in the same class which gives a larger storage space.
- **ELITE COOL DESIGN** has a trendy exterior with an anti-rust finish that ensures no rusting & peeling.

WHITE-WESTINGHOUSE TWIN-TUB WASHING MACHINE

- White **JET WASH SYSTEM**, which gives a faster & stronger wash flow for whiter wash.
- Clothes are better rinsed with the **HIGH SPIN SPEED** of 1400 rpm giving out drier laundry and no residue of detergents on clothes.

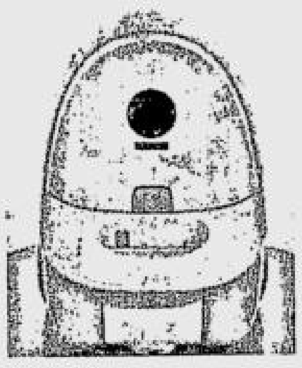
ELECTROLUX FREE-STANDING GAS COOKERS

- Has **THERMACOUPLE** that is a safety cut-off valve that immediately shuts gas off if flame is accidentally extinguish.
- Has **SAFETY GUARD**, which prevents your hands from being burned.
- All Electrolux free standing gas cookers are formaldehyde free

Electrolux

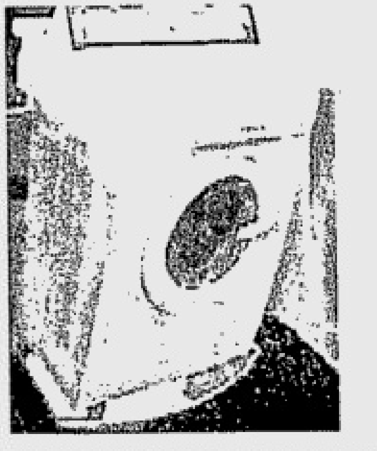
ELECTROLUX REFRIGERATORS

- With a **MULTI-FLOW SYSTEM**, distributes cooled air through multiple outlets over a 360-degree radius.
- A fully stock freezer automatically activates **AIR SHOWER**, which maintains deep-freezing temperatures.
- All units have a strong galvanized finish to protect against rusting & peeling.



ELECTROLUX VACUUM CLEANERS

- High suction power and filtration system that can filter out microscopic particles as small as 0.06 microns.
- Offers patented **BACKSAVER SYSTEM** consisting of the unique S-shaped tube which is lightweight and with an ergonomically designed handle.



ELECTROLUX FRONTLOAD WASHERS

- With a **PROGRAMMABLE FLEXI-WASH**, which allows you to choose the suitable program for the fabric you are washing.
- Saves 30-70% of your **WATER BILLS** as it uses an average of 10 to 16 liters of water/kg compared to an ordinary washer.
- Activecare Spray Technology that makes clothes cleaner and rids stubborn stains. Its Active Balance control disentangles and balances the wash load automatically for gentler wash.

ELECTROLUX PHILIPPINES, INC.

Mission Statement

Electrolux Philippines, Inc. aims to be among the top three players in home appliances in the country within 3 years. We will do this by offering products of consistent high quality, intelligent innovations that will make everyday life more comfortable, easy and safe. We will provide products, services and marketing of such excellent value that customers will actively choose to do business with us. From this we will create shareholder value.

We will offer our proprietary customer-driven Homecare service providing information, loyalty incentives, professional consultation and after-sales care services for potential and current customers of the Electrolux and White-Westinghouse brands.

Backed by the Electrolux Group, the world's market leader in home appliances, Electrolux Philippines, Inc., strives to understand the current and changing needs of Filipino consumers and manufacture products to meet them better and quicker. Last but not the least, we will have team members who embrace the Electrolux values of professionalism, cooperation and speed that will be critical in helping Electrolux Philippines, Inc. strengthen the Electrolux Group's position of the World's No. 1 Choice.

The Electrolux Group.
The world's No.1 choice.

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LIFESTYLE
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Heiress of surprises

By Pam Pastor

TWENTY-five-year-old Coralie Charriol is full of surprises.

"I race cars," she says nonchalantly. Staring at the beautiful woman sitting primly in her white suit, pink top and pink shoes, one finds it hard to imagine her doing something so—for lack of a better term—manly. And the surprises do not end there. After sadly saying that she hasn't had the chance to race because, one, she's no longer in France, and two, doesn't have the time for it. "I'm a little bit of an adventurer," she says. "I like outdoor sports. Anything dangerous, really."

Dangerous like bungy jumping? No. "I did sky diving. I took it to another level. I said if I had to jump off of something, it better be from the highest point. And I'm doing it only once but I did it. It was crazy. When you land, you can run a marathon because you have so much adrenaline pumping through your body. You can run like 25 miles nonstop. It was very scary. But that was fun," she says, her eyes shining at the memory.

Evidently, this woman is not lacking in guts—something that will come in handy when she takes over the Charriol empire.

Coralie's plunge into the family business began when she was 21 years old, because of a design class. "This was in college. My father saw my bag designs and thought they would

HEIRESS/ p.D2

Coralie Charriol, heiress-apparent to the fashion house, follows her dad's advice—not to be afraid to be bold

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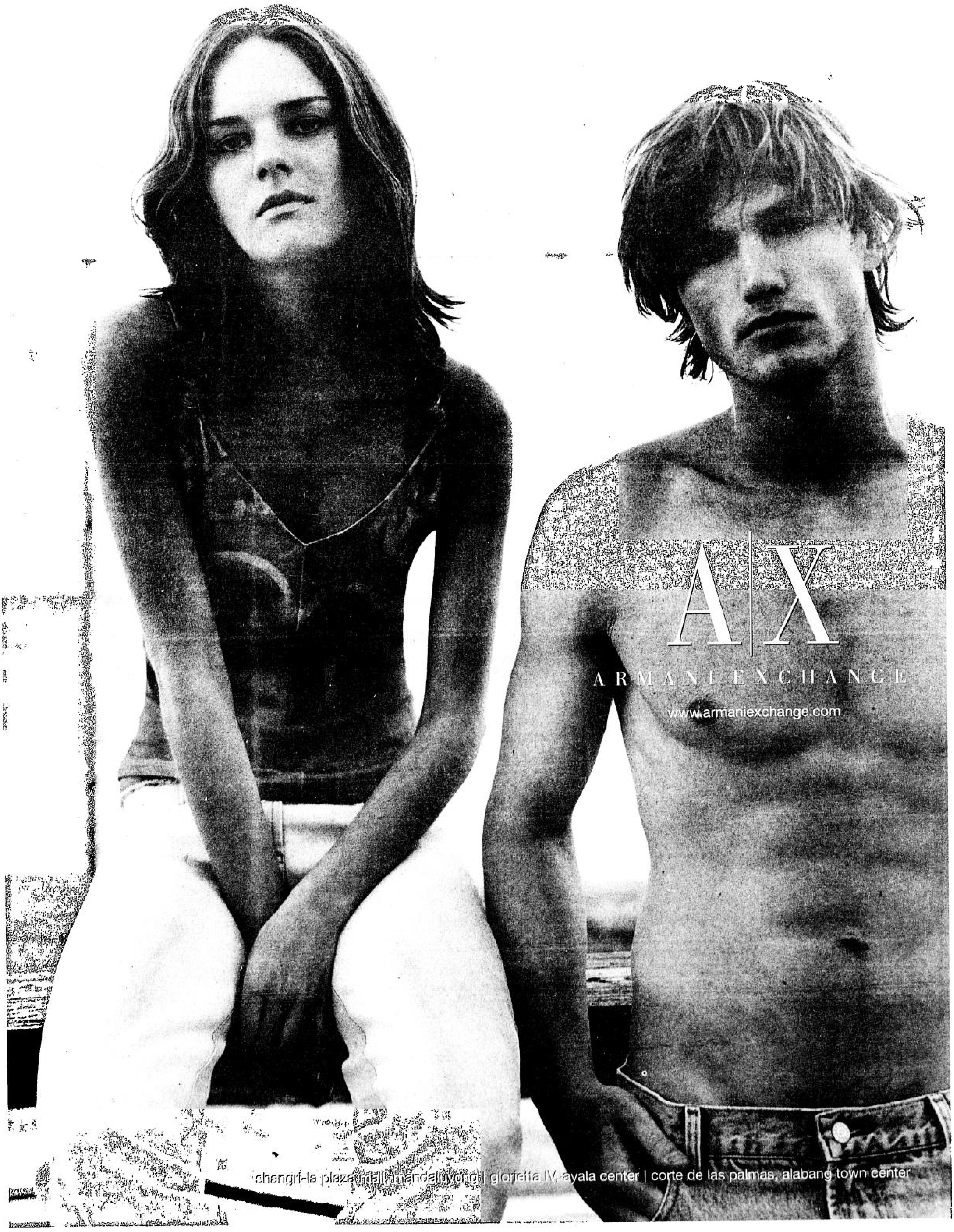
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The man who makes 'le grande difference'

By Chelo Banal-Formoso

Charriol built his luxury goods brand by believing in himself and banking on his ties with the Asian market

THE LOOK of style, Charriol shades line 2002

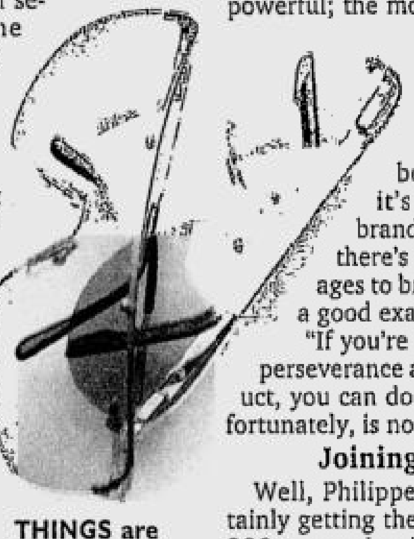
PHILIPPE CHARRIOL, the unbelievably self-confident risk-taker behind the brand

PHOTO BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

PHILIPPE Charriol, the charming Frenchman behind the world-renowned brand, was in town this week for a three-day conference with 70 Charriol agents and journalists from all over Asia.

It was the very first Southeast Asian Regional Conference for the company that Charriol founded in 1983 and, as could be expected of a marketing genius like him, he took advantage of the media mileage by launching his daughter Coralie's debut handbag collection.

The man who started his career dealing in wines and spirits has parlayed the *joie de vivre* inherent in that industry into *l'art de vivre la difference*—the art of living the difference—in his line of personal luxury goods.



THINGS are looking up. Charriol sunglasses collection

All the bad publicity and security warnings about the Philippines did not stop him from convening his Charriol dealers and the media in Manila. "I've been coming to the Philippines for 30 years. The first time I arrived here, the airport had burned down the night before. That was frightening. It was 1972 and the army was everywhere," recalled Charriol.

"I treat every incident like an accident you may have while crossing the street. I mean, with bad luck, something will happen to you. The Americans are always afraid. During the Iraqi war, my daughter was supposed to have a visiting American friend. When she didn't show up I called the mother. She said her daughter couldn't go because of the war. The war was in Iraq," he said.

FAR from neutral, colors distinguish the Charriol Megeve watches

Returning the compliment

The Philippines is a thriving market for the Charriol brand, fourth biggest in Asia after Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Last November, Store Specialists, Inc., local distributors for Philippe Charriol, opened a Charriol boutique and launched the Coralie Jewellery at the Power Plant in Rockwell. "You've been treating my brand very well so why not do a promotion in the country that treats the brand so well? Manila is well-equipped for meetings," said Charriol. He mentioned the sunny weather, the smiling people, the top-rate facilities as plus factors. "Traffic is terrible but that's irrelevant," he added since the Asian press and dealers were all billeted at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

"Japan is the biggest market but it's not easy to break through either," said Charriol. "The Japanese go gaga over around 10 brands, the rest they ignore. You take a street in Milan or Rome, that strip with all the brands—the first shop is Gucci, it's packed; the second one is Vuitton and it's packed, the third one is Prada, it's packed, then you have Cartier same, then you have Ferragamo, same, and that's it. The rest is...Hello? Hello? The rest have no business."

Despite that, new brands are popping up in new categories of luxury goods.

There are people who say the luxury goods market is getting more and more difficult to penetrate. "You have a few brands that are so powerful; the more they advertise the more they are known, the more money they have the more stores they open, the more stores they open... it's a cycle where one step begets another—that's why it's difficult to fight the top brands," noted Charriol. But then there's always someone who manages to break through and Charriol is a good example.

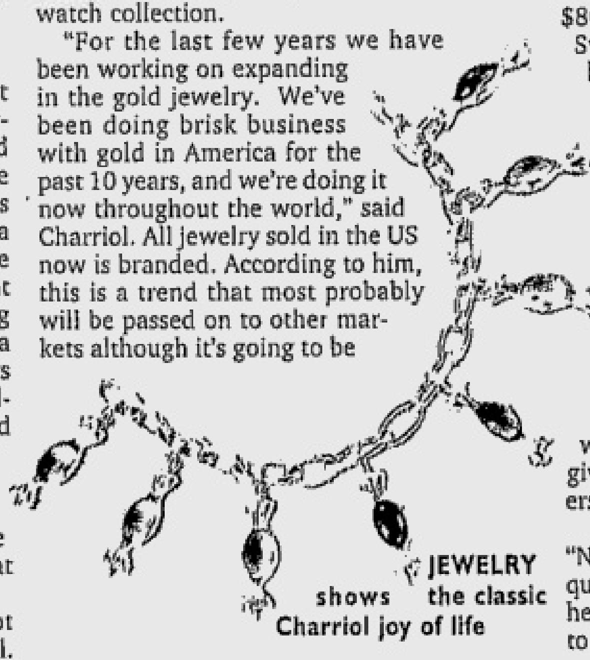
"If you're bright and strong and have perseverance and if you have a good product, you can do it," he said. "Charriol, unfortunately, is not yet in the first category."

Joining the big leagues

Well, Philippe Charriol the brand is certainly getting there. In 20 years it has swept 200 countries in 42 categories, such as watches, jewelry, bags, eyewear, small leather goods, even writing instruments.

Watches still serve as the spine of Charriol's business. Fast catching up with the watch sales is the heart-stopping jewelry collection. Charriol is well- known for and in fact came out first with the jewelry line that matches the watch collection.

"For the last few years we have been working on expanding in the gold jewelry. We've been doing brisk business with gold in America for the past 10 years, and we're doing it now throughout the world," said Charriol. All jewelry sold in the US now is branded. According to him, this is a trend that most probably will be passed on to other markets although it's going to be more difficult in Asia due to the pricing.



JEWELRY shows the classic Charriol joy of life

Diamonds are selling very well, particularly when set in watches. Colored stones, colored diamonds and colored straps are also hot. Philippe Charriol was wearing a watch with diamonds from the latest Columbus Round collection.

The St. Tropez watch, which was introduced in 1989, is still very much in the running, saleswise. It remains No. 1 in Asia because at $800-900, it is among the most affordable Swiss-made luxury watches. The Charriol high-end watches sell for as much as $60,000 retail.

Charriol has a hand in the design of his products. "Nothing comes out of my company without my approval," he stressed, then quickly corrected himself. "Except for the handbags."

Fresh blood

The leather handbag collection happens to be daughter Coralie's territory. (See accompanying story) "It's good to have fresh blood, new ideas, young connections. It's very good to have someone who can tell you something straightforward, give you ideas now that a big bulk of consumers are in her age group," said Charriol.

Son Alexander is an artist in New York. "Not in the business, not yet. Who knows?" quipped the dad. "The more I say no, the more he will come. He's only 23 years old. He used to sign his work Kalani, which is his Hawaiian name (he was born in Hawaii). Then when I went to New York I saw he was signing his work Kalani Charriol. I asked why. He said, Charriol is well known, it's easier."

Philippe said he travelled less now with Coralie in the company. He spent the winter season ice racing in Megeve, France. "During the winter time, pilots have nothing to do so they all embark on ice racing. I'm a gentleman driver. They have all the time to practice. But I did pretty good. I was 16th, which means I'm the 16th best driver in the world on ice, out of a field of 60," he beamed.

His wife Annick has been successful at being the woman behind the man in the spotlight. She has been taking care of the houses (in Hong Kong, Megeve and New York) and what Philippe called "leisure," a broad term for the good life, which includes hosting launch parties and promotions around the world—a new boutique in China, a new corner in Thailand, an exhibition of jewelry in Dubai.

"You have to keep convincing people," said Charriol. "You're just like a priest, you're converting consumers to the Prada religion, the Cartier religion, the Charriol religion. In fact, we have more adornments than the church."

As Philippe Charriol knows very well, the brands, his included, also have the faithful.

Email the author at cbformoso@inquirer.com.ph

Heiress of surprises

From page D1

be great to actually manufacture. I was like, 'Are you crazy? They're not good enough.'" But, evidently, they were, because those designs became the first Coralie collection in 1998.

"I started getting more and more interested in the business. When I graduated from Tufts University in Boston three years ago, I got more and more into the promotion of it and the PR and brand image building." Last year, the Coralie jewelry collection was launched.

BLACK patent print leather Coralie handbag

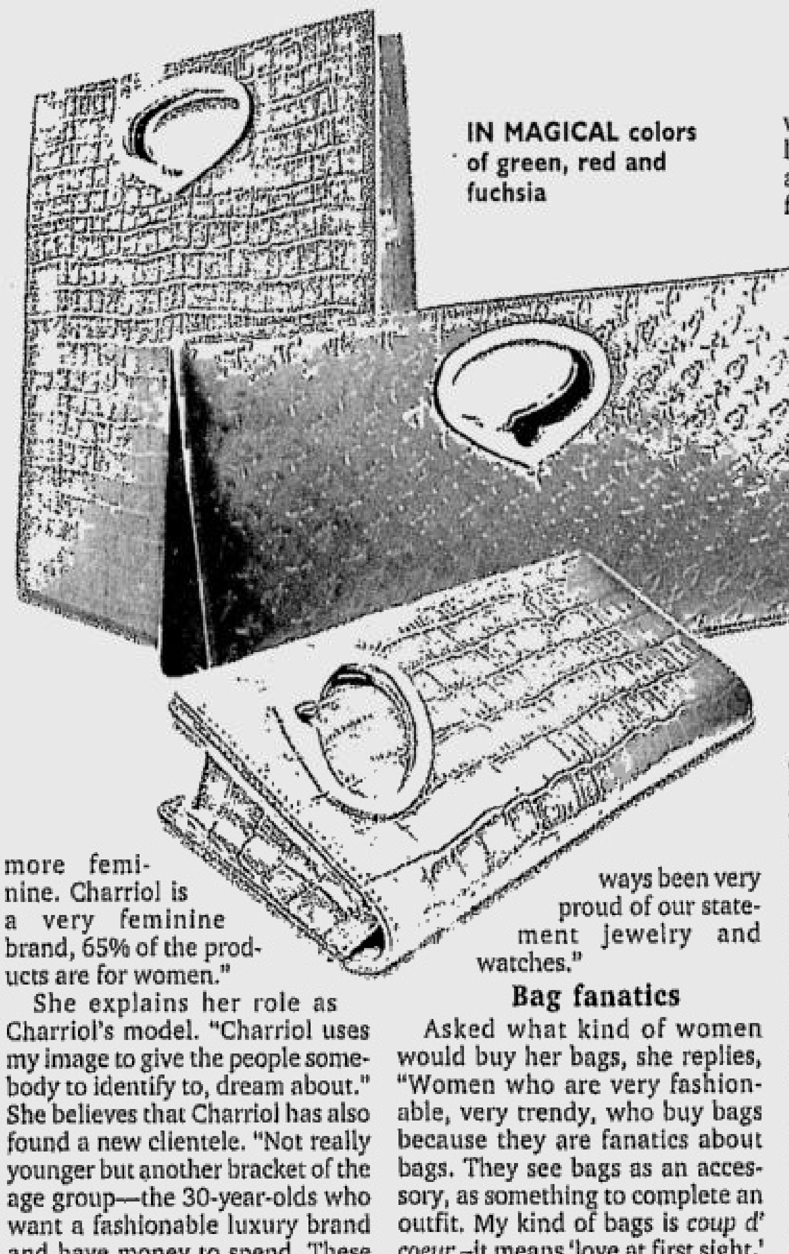
Inspiration

She spoke about her concept, her inspiration. "The concept of the 'C' logo is what I use for my bags. It's a continuation. The 'C' of Charriol is the family crest from my grandfather. And since the logo mania is happening right now, we are using the 'C'. We've given it a story, the bow and arrow of cupid. The 'C' is the bow and the arrows inside are arrows of love that fly and are supposed to hit you in the heart and make you fall in love," she says with a laugh, as she traces the arrows embossed on the leather of her red bag with her fingers.

"I want the bags to look very stylish, very clean. As you can see, the bags are very rectangular or square, very clean angles, very structured, but feminine and luxurious, and modern too. I have a book of ideas that I just draw. Everything that comes into mind I just draw, I just write it down. Or I talk to my father to see if it's interesting or not." But it doesn't end there. "You have to take it to another level and develop it. Like I have this watch idea but you can't just show one drawing, you have to make a lot of drawings in different sizes and actually understand your concept and your idea of what you want to do."

Coralie's collection makes use of vibrant colors, deviating from the usual neutrals. "That's the whole fashion now. Gold is back, that's why all my handles are in gold. Color is back. We have color straps on all our watches now—pink, blue, green, beige, everything. All the dials have color. We're using semi-precious stones on our Bonbon line. We are using rubies and sapphires, different colored stones—lots and lots and lots of color. The '90s was minimalist black and white but now it's all colors. You can be very decorative."

Aside from colors, the Charriol brand has gone through various changes in the past 20 years. "It's still French, it's still a luxury brand, it's still high-end," Coralie explains. "But we went from gray to prune, which is a trendy color but still a very rich color, a very royal color. We went from Philippe Charriol to Charriol, which is a more modern name. It's more of a brand now. Even our boutiques went from gold to chrome. And then with the introduction of my face, it's become more feminine. Charriol is a very feminine brand, 65% of the products are for women."



IN MAGICAL colors of green, red and fuchsia

She explains her role as Charriol's model. "Charriol uses my image to give the people somebody to identify to, dream about." She believes that Charriol has also found a new clientele. "Not really younger but another bracket of the age group—the 30-year-olds who want a fashionable luxury brand and have money to spend. These are people who want to be individual and unique so they go for Charriol. They're very unique products. Like our big watches, you don't see that everywhere. Anyone who wears that wants to make a statement. Our jewelry and watches make statements. There are products in the collection that can be safe. But we've always been very proud of our statement jewelry and watches."

Bag fanatics

Asked what kind of women would buy her bags, she replies, "Women who are very fashionable, very trendy, who buy bags because they are fanatics about bags. They see bags as an accessory, as something to complete an outfit. My kind of bags is *coup d' coeur* –it means 'love at first sight.' If people don't know Charriol and they see it, they buy it because of *coup d' coeur*—because they fall in love with some item right away and they go buy it. And then they get acquainted with the brand. I think that's how girls will come—girls will go, oh my god, I need that pink bag because it will go with this outfit that I need to wear with these shoes, and it's going look great for Saturday night. It's an accessory, it completes an outfit, it completes a look, cool for Saturday shopping or a dinner party."

Being next in line to head the Charriol house can be scary sometimes. "It's a huge brand, you know," Coralie says. "It's very scary. I wouldn't want him to just say, 'Okay, it's yours, goodbye.' I'd be like, 'Are you crazy?' I have to get more and more involved. And see the financial side to it, that's very important. Right now, I'm vice president and I'm very happy where I am. I have a lot to learn. There are a couple of projects I want to take care of—the leathers, and continue with all the jewelry. Those are my goals—to develop more beautiful products and be more efficient. Those are my two goals—leather and jewelry. I want more stones, bigger carats. I intend to come out with two collections out a year, introduce a more casual line with canvas and develop the Bonbon line. A cosmetic line would be good but that's for the future."

Faced with big responsibilities even now, it's no big surprise that Coralie is extremely busy. She speaks of her normal day in New York. "I wake up early. If I can, I work out. If I can't, I skip that part. I have breakfast. I call Geneva—I have three hours to call Geneva because I'm in New York. I answer e-mail. Then I have lunch with a friend or do something for lunch. Then I have meetings—it really depends. I meet up with our eyewear person. The afternoon is more free. Sometimes, at night

HEIRESS/ p.D3

Heiress of surprises

From page D2

when I come back, I have to talk to Hong Kong because that's the only time I can talk to them, or I answer e-mails at night. I work from my house so it's a little bit difficult sometimes, you get lazy. I also have this person who helps me do all my drawings, so she comes like once a week. We sketch out ideas."

Traveling is also a big part of her life. "I travel so much that when I get back I'm usually sick with jet lag," she says. "Three weeks ago I was in Tokyo for 10 days, traveling and promoting Charriol, I got back, it took me one week to recover. I was waking up at 5 in the morning and by 8 I had to be in bed. It was a disaster, for a week I couldn't get it together. Now I'm here for three days. Then I'm going to Venezuela in June, then Turkey in July. There are a lot of trips planned ahead. From here, I'll go to Bangkok and Hong Kong. It's nonstop traveling."

When it comes to relaxation, Coralie likes doing different things. "Usually in Asia, I get a massage. I go shopping, I work out. There are so many things to do in New York—a lot of galleries and things like that. I go to the movies. I love the movies."

Coralie's style is very eclectic. "It goes from very sporty—from sneakers, very comfortable—to the highest heels you can possibly find, very sexy heels. And goes from very feminine to very boyish. I swing. I follow trends. I like fashion. But I'm an individual. I'm usually ahead of trends."

When it comes to jewelry, she's a big fan of rings. Big ones. "I like big, big rings. Anything oversized, I've always liked. Definitely rings."

Disdain

She likes shopping for shoes and coats but faces dressing rooms with disdain. "I hate trying things on in a store. I hate going to the dressing room and changing. Coats you can just put on top. I usually steal my mother's clothes. Or when it comes to shopping for clothes, it's usually *coup d' coeur* for me."

When asked about her passion, Coralie paused and said, "I don't know if it's a passion. It's more of a drive. New York is one of the biggest cities in the world. Everybody's going 300 miles an hour. Everyone around you is doing a hundred things making you feel like they're overachieving. And some people are in banks and trading millions and doing this and that and I always feel that what I'm doing is never enough. So I always feel like I have to do more and do more and do more. I think my passion is to be able to create and produce and be efficient—to be overachieving. That's what I want to do."

"On another level, that's not work, I love the arts, I've always loved the arts, anything from film to paintings to different designs. I've always loved fashion, every type of fashion. Beautiful objects, things that are aesthetically pleasing to the eye like architecture. My passion's always been art."

This Arts History and Literature graduate has always been an arts aficionado, taking classes in photography and filmmaking. "I was at the New York Film Academy one summer. I made my own films. That was fun."

Coralie has dreams outside of Charriol. "I want to write a book one day. I don't know if it will be fiction or a photo book but I want to write a book. Obviously, I want to have children. I want to act in a movie or a play one day."

When her father Philippe was mentioned, Coralie's eyes lit up. "He's great, he's great. He never wants to talk business with me. I'd be like, 'Dad, I'm calling you about this, this, this and this,' and then he'd say, 'Did you book your ticket to Turkey?' I'm like, 'Dad, I'm talking to you about the bags.' Then he'd say, 'Yeah, the bags, okay.' He's very funny. He always wants to hear my opinions and everything. But he doesn't want to scare me, he doesn't want me to worry about anything, he wants to fix the problems on his own. He wants me to enjoy the fun part of it. I always have to tell him, 'Okay, tell me what's going on.'

Coralie said that the best thing her father has taught her is "to be bold." "Like the other day, I gave a watch to Julia Roberts. I just went right up to her, talked to her, took my watch off my wrist and I gave it to her." And what did Julia say? "She gave me her watch! Which was a Swatch! She's wearing the watch now."

"My father always tells me, "You're very lucky, you're smart, you're young, you're pretty. Whatever you want, you go get it. And usually people will not say 'no' to you." We'll see," the heiress to the Charriol empire says, her eyes glinting.

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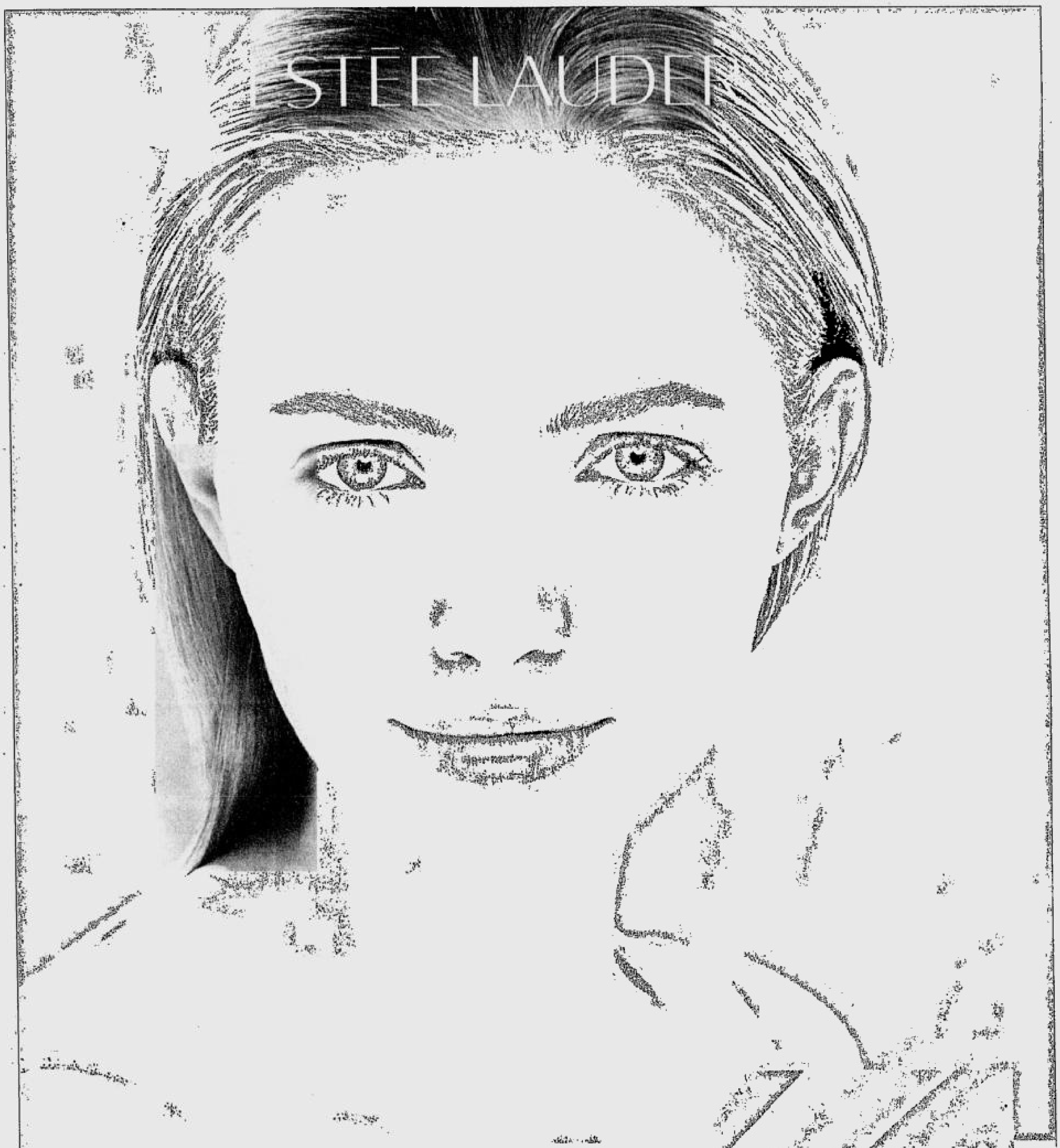

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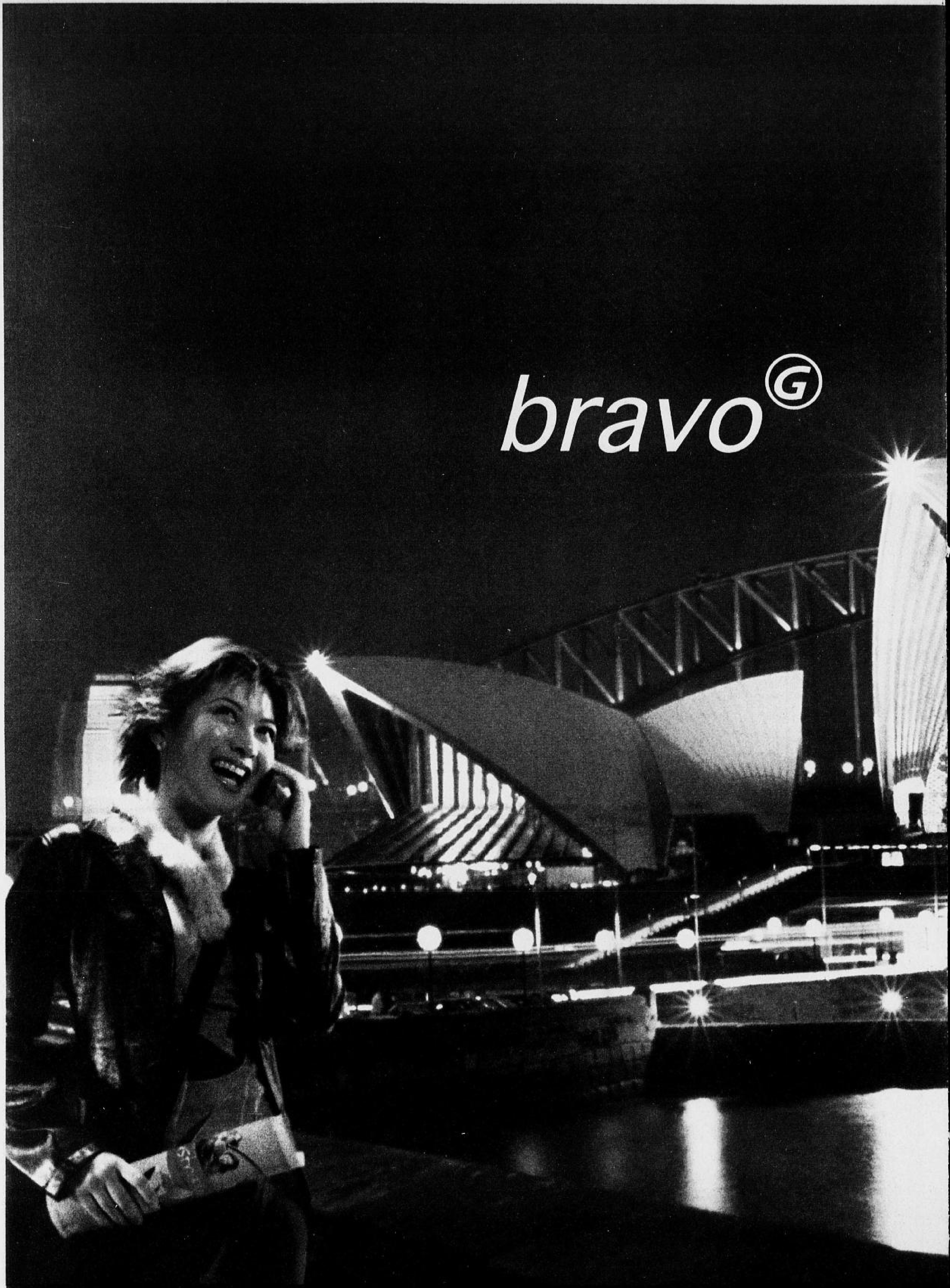

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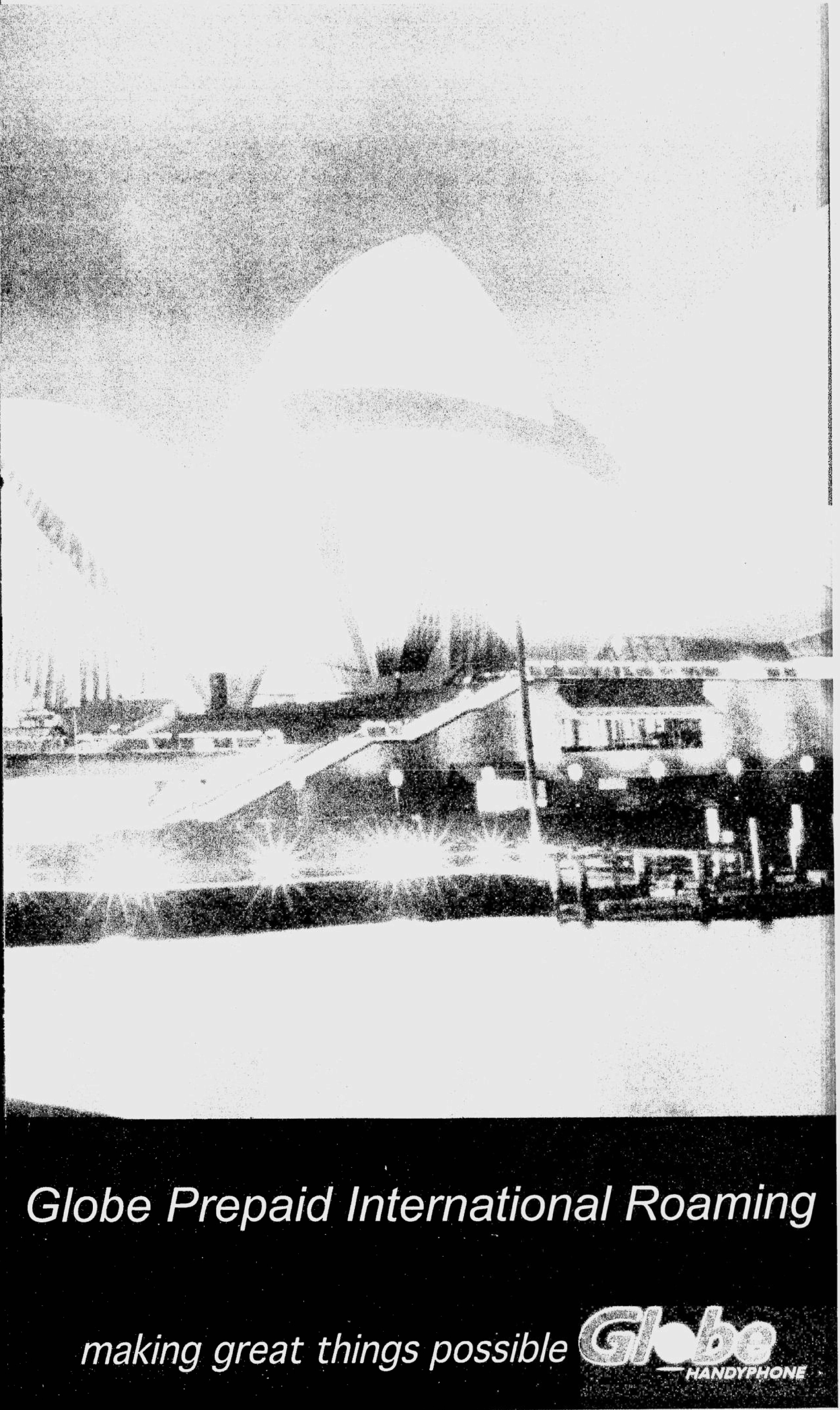
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HANDYPHONE

EVERY month, Mosaic carries an equal mix of career and casual separates.

Pants to pant for

By Kitty Go
Contributor
Photos by Betoy Johnson

Just barely six months, Mosaic is drawing hordes for its perfect-fit and sure-style pants and other basics

IF I HAD a couture dress for the number of times women had complained about not finding trousers with the right fit, I'd surely have a closet to rival that of Middle Eastern socialite Mouna Al-Ayoub, one of the biggest customers of couture.

Fit aside, there is the matter over which every Pinoy agonizes, whether buying Manolos or Mars bars—the price. Anne Marie Robicheau has addressed the issue of fit and frugality with Mosaic, her new clothing store at the 2/L Rockwell Power Plant (tel. 898-2035).

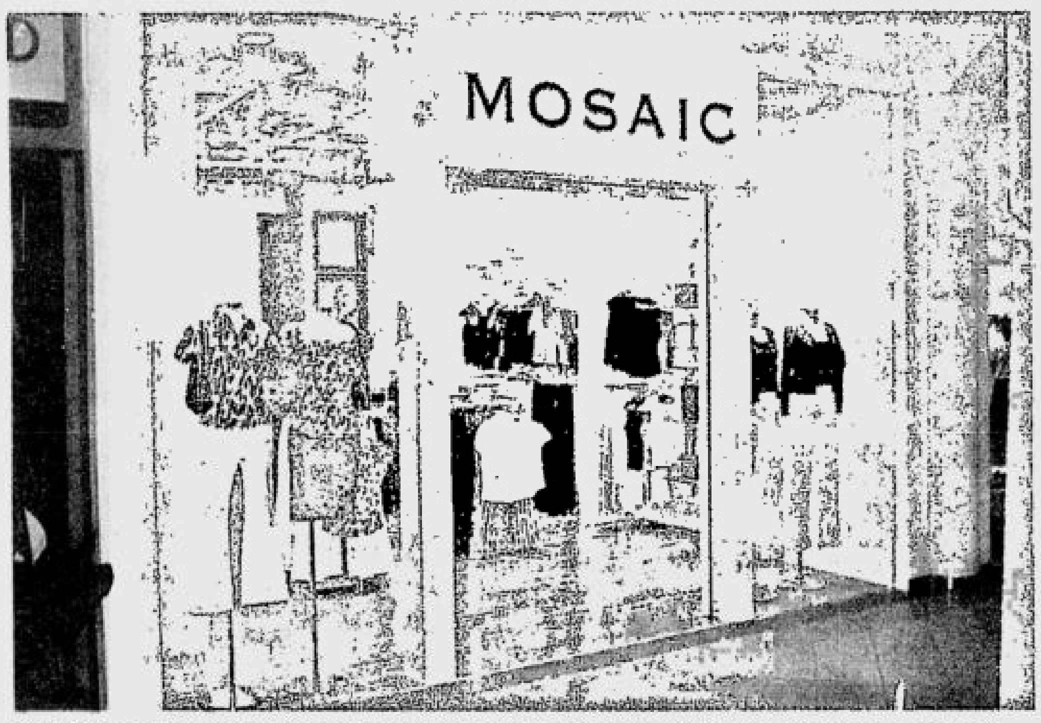
Armed with experience in private label design and manufacturing from the toughest city in fashion, Anne Marie wants to develop a local brand using professional systems she learned in New York while working for companies specializing in private label. The private label, supposedly developed and designed by stores such as Barney's, Macy's, Saks Fifth Avenue, etc. (but is really designed and produced by large manufacturing houses that stick the stores' labels on), is an area in the garment business that is extremely competitive not only in design but more so in price and speed of merchandise turnover. With Mosaic, Anne Marie has created her own private label albeit in a freestanding store rather than a department store. With Mosaic, she wants to "bring New York quality to the Philippines."

Anne Marie's pride is her undying devotion to the fit of pants. She admits to being her own house model but also asks her friends of various body types to try on samples. I love discovering new ventures because owners are usually more in touch with the market. Mosaic has been in business for barely six months, but Anne Marie sees no reason to advertise or court the media, as her business has been brisk since day one. All of her business is from referrals and clearly, the products speak for themselves. "I get one lady in then she tells her whole family," says Anne Marie.

Her star products, pants, retail from P1,200 for stretch denim or twill to P1,800 for stretch rayon gabardine ones that are perfect for the office. One reason Mosaic has a good fit for bottoms is that sizes range from 0 to 12.

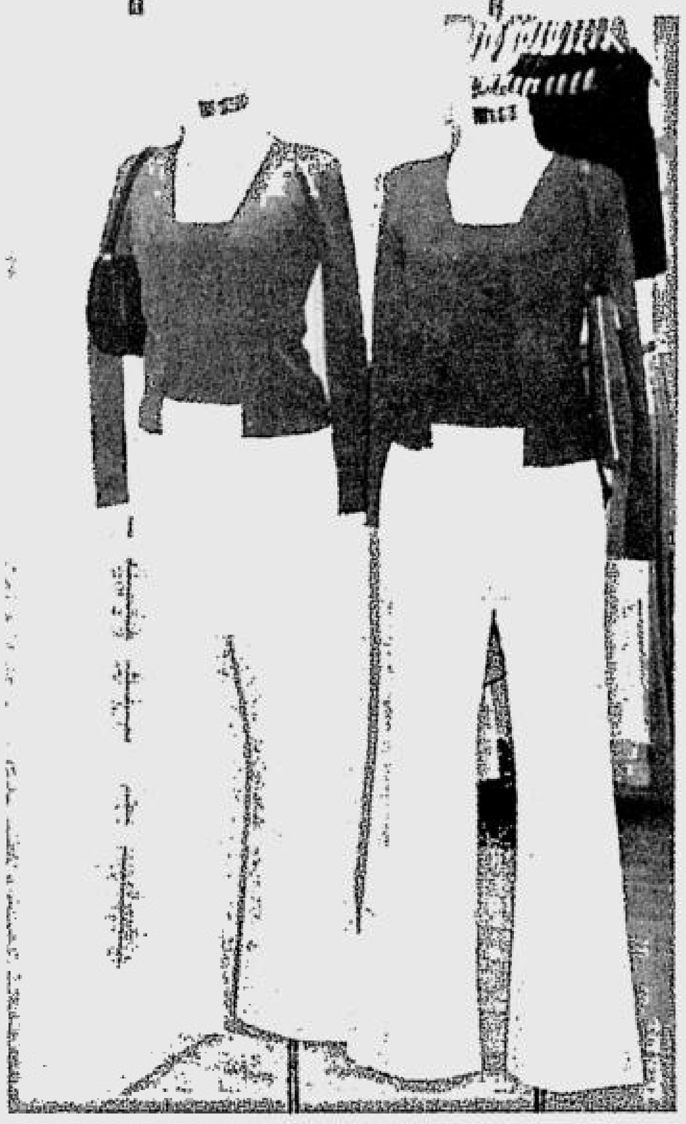
Tops (XS-XL) start at P880 for an engineer-ribbed cotton/rayon/lycra camisole knit top. Knits comprise 15 percent of Mosaic product mix and Anne Marie makes sure that every fortnightly delivery carries an equal mix of separates from casual and career product categories. Mosaic does not carry evening pieces but some styles, such as a Missoni-inspired, multi-striped, bias-cut knit camisole, which retails for P860, can go from office to cocktail.

Going forward, Mosaic is going to start carrying longer lengths in pants and also delivering pinstriped ones in three weeks. Mosaic sells tremendous amounts of stretch cotton oxford or poplin blouses and will soon have cap-sleeved tuxedo tops. And finally, for national cheapness and the imperfect body in us all, Mosaic offers free alterations. What more could a fashion and budget-conscious Pinay ask for?



MOSAIC at Rockwell brings New York private label quality to the Philippine market.

TOP this: By far, some of the best-fitting pants in the market today with tops to match



Paper trail

If you want to speed up your grand entrance into society, good quality paper is the way to go

IN THIS age of Internet and multimedia communication and entertainment, do people still use stationery? That is the question I posed to Cinthy Tambunting-Recto, a partner at the specialty stationery store Paperie at Rockwell (2/F Lifestyles, Power Plant Mall; tel. 898-2541). Personally, I still use social stationery, but then I also don't know how to use a Palm Pilot, let alone turn on a TV (whatever happened to the single remote control?).

"You'd be surprised how many kids (16 to 18-year-olds) come in to buy our paper and even special order stationery," explains Cinthy sitting behind a pile of Crane's sample books. "These kids see their parents using high quality paper so it becomes part of their lives."

However, there is the known tendency for children not to want to be like their parents. That's where custom stationery and the various product lines at Paperie come in.

"They will order personalized stationery because they learned from their parents, but they will choose something younger. We have bright colors and there is something for everyone," says Cinthy, who also makes sure that prices are for everyone with gift tags from Stars and Eggplant at P42 to custom invitations from Crane's at P250 (the most expensive to date) each.

Aside from the classic American brand Crane's, Paperie also carries the Florentine brand Rossi, and three other American brands, Gibson, Encore Studios and Stars and Eggplant, which is also carried by Kate Spade's Kate's Paperie in New York City. If you're looking for Park Avenue posh, Crane's with its boxed classic sheets, cards and notes is the way to go. To the trade, "a note" is any type of paper that has a single fold. From existing single initials to your own monogram, Crane's can do it.

For gilded Italian style, Rossi has gift wrap, albums and desk sets up to P3,830. Rossi's trademark is Bertini, part paisley and part floral, which covers practically every area of its product. The Gibson line features traditional wedding accruements such as albums, keepsake boxes and toile de Jouy accessories. Encore Studio is the ornate yet moderately priced custom stationery line at Paperie while Stars and Eggplant is a funky line that would go down well with swell twentysomethings. Personally, Stars and Eggplant is a great brand to introduce to the younger set, perhaps to start a love affair with paper.

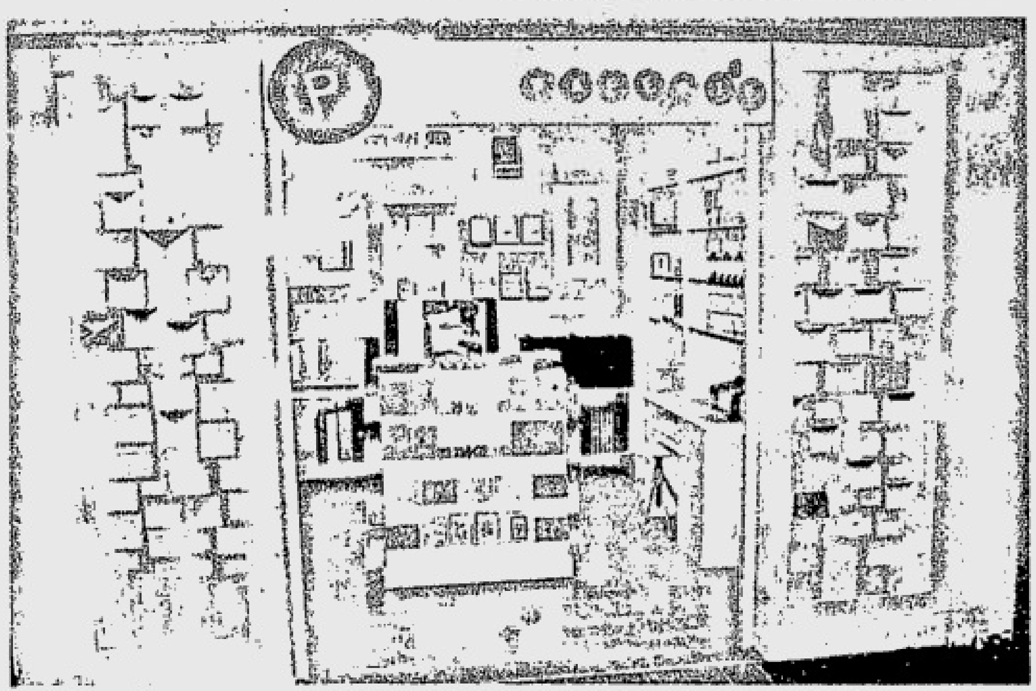
The type of paper you use says a lot about you. Some people run their fingers down business cards to see if letters are embossed or merely printed. Yet, like fashion, paper is extremely personal. There is a recent interest in America for the British paper brand Smythson's of Bond Street because they recently opened a store on Fifth Avenue. I do use Smythson's at home in London (with the intention to patronize local brands), but I find Crane's, which I use at home in Hong Kong, of much better quality.

If you want to speed up your grand entrance into society, good quality paper is the way to go. Aside from the fact that receiving a handwritten note is flattering because nothing beats the effort and care put into it, the choice of paper and print, from colors to fonts, separates the true *buenas familias* from the *arrivistes.* Cinthy suggests ladies start a social stationery set with the following: a set of plain notes with or without a border and possibly with a monogram, cards with your full name on it, any size of sheets except 8½x11", with your full name and matching lined envelopes with an address on the flap.

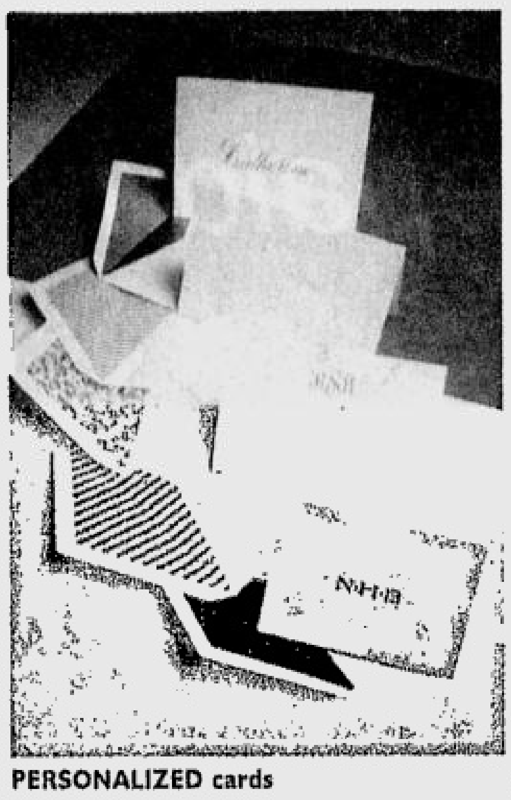
For gentlemen, a set of plain cards with your full name and monarch sheets, also with your full name, can double as business stationery. What sets business and social stationery apart is where the address is on envelopes. For social paper, the address is on the flap and for business, it is on the plain side, which we normally call the front, but to the stationery trade is the back. Cinthy also recommends fill-in invitation cards to invite (hopefully) the many friends you will be corresponding with. Otherwise, you can always write to your mother. ***Kitty Go***

For custom orders, visit the Penthouse, Builder's Center, 170 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati, or call 812-1819, fax 819-0391, or e-mail jjcranes@evoserve.com

PAPERIE starts them young: The paper trail starts at birth with children's stationery and birth announcements.



IF these walls could speak, Paperie will not tell you who its clients are, but the store front and sides say it all.



PERSONALIZED cards

Learn emotional/karmic healing

GOINGS ON

A WORKSHOP on emotional and karmic healing will be conducted by hypnotherapist and higher consciousness lecturer Frances L. Gloria 1:30-5:30 p.m., May 25, at Inner Mind Development Institute, Room 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Greenbelt, Makati City. Call 810-7245 or 892-6806, 824-7586 or telefax 815-9890 or 0917-3648090.

SPECIAL COURSE. Application for the annual Rio Alma Poetry Clinic has been extended to May 31. Officers and members of Linangan sa Imahen, Retorika at Anyo (LIRA) will facilitate the workshops. Successful workshop fellows will become LIRA members. Interested individuals should send application letter, resume with 2x2 photo, and five samples of their poems to: LIRA, 73-A Scout Limbaga St., Barangay Laging Handa, Quezon City. Call 641-5067, 527-2192 local 613 or 527-2192 local 609.

CONVENTION. The 31st National Student Press Congress and 62nd National Student Press Convention of the College Editors Guild of the Philippines, will be held May 27-June 1 at the Girl Scouts of the Philippines, Camp Alano, Toril, Davao City. Invited speakers include Dr. Bienvenido Lumbera, filmmaker Raymond Red, Christine Bellen of the Ateneo de Manila University, writers Kerima Tariman and Richard Gappi, Inquirer reporter Agnes Donato, Washington Post correspondent Carlos Conde, and journalists and artists based in Davao City. Call 0919-3197156 or 0919-4391962.

SEMINAR. The Professional Librarians' Review Center (PLRC) is conducting a two-day seminar-workshop on "Abstracting and Indexing Made Easy: A Modular Approach" May 28-29, at the Benitez Alumni Center, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City. Call 927-985, 435-5727 or 0919-2399464.

BEAUTY SEARCH. The Search for Ms Makati ends with the coronation of the winner at 7 p.m. tonight at the Ballroom of Mandarin Oriental Manila.

CANDLE COMPETITION. In support of Filipino candle makers and designers, PHILTRADE Exhibits, in cooperation with Santuario de San Antonio Parish Center, is hosting the First Philippine Candle Design Competition June 29-30, at the parish center, Mackinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City. Call 820-7879/1570.

LAUNCH. "Hublag Jamindanganon" will be launched May 26 at the Wawa Dam, Montalban, Rizal. Assembly time is 7 a.m. in front of Sandiganbayan, Quezon City. Participants must be natives of Jamindan, Capiz currently residing/working in Metro Manila.

Call 427-8497, 428-8400, 0916-4612563 or 09207684543.

PROGRAM. Filipino students aged 15 to 18 years old are invited to take part in the Cathay Pacific International Wilderness Experience Program 2002, July 21-31. Over 60 students from Hong Kong, Mainland China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, Singapore and South Africa are participating. Application forms are available at www.cathaypacific.com.ph or at the following offices of Cathay Pacific: 25th Floor Trafalgar Plaza, 105 H. V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City; and 8 Rivergate Mall, General Maxilom Ave., Cebu City. Interested students should submit a 400-word essay in English on any environmental, resume, copy of a valid passport and a completed application form. Deadline for filing of application is May 25. Call 848-2701 (Manila) or 032 2540746 (Cebu).

AWARD. The deadline for submission of nominations to the country's first ever Outstanding SME (small and medium enterprise) Award has been extended to May 30. Nominees must be 100 percent Filipino owned and duly registered with appropriate government agencies in the Philippines; have no criminal record; be classified as either micro, small or medium enterprise with assets of not more than P100 million at the time of nomination; be engaged in industry, agribusiness or services, whether single proprietorship, cooperative, partnership or corporation; have a strategic business plan; have been in operation for at least three years at the time of nomination; and have not received the DTI CITEM's (Center for International Expositions and Missions) Golden Shell Award.

Nomination forms are available at any regional and provincial office of the Department of Trade and Industry. Call 890-4968, 897-7596 or 897-1680.

SALE. AVID Sales Corporation, leading proponent of the digital lifestyle, is holding sales at nine of its outlets until June 16.

AV Surfer, the country's only AV-IT convergence store, is holding sales at All Mall (until June 16), Alabang Town Center (May 31-June 2) and Ayala Cebu (May 31-June 2).

Aiwa Showroom Kalaw and Best Brands Balintawak have prepared selected value packages with as much as 40 percent discounts May 29-31 and May 30-June 2, respectively.

Special value packages and zero interest deals on selected television sets and Sony HandyCam await customers at Avid Sony Shop Quad May 31-June 2, Filinvest May 31-June 2 and United Nations Avenue, Ermita, May 27-June 1. Call 525-2215, 525-3624 and 525-3547.

TRAINING. The Philippine Robotics Olympiad (PRO) will conduct free teachers' training June 5-7. This is open to all schools who would like to participate in a forthcoming PRO event.

The PRO is a science, technology and educational event, which aims to offer the country's promising elementary (aged 10-12 years old) and high school students (aged 13-16 years old), an opportunity to expand their horizons through the exploration of robots and robotic systems in schools using the LEGO education set. Participating schools can send only one representative each for the elementary and high school levels. Reservations must be made on or before May 27 with the PRO national secrétariat. Call 536-3092 and 525-8752 or drop by the Philippine Science Centrum, University of the Philippines Manila Compound, Pedro Gil Street, Ermita, Manila.

SEMINAR. A.T. Valino Public Relations Firm is holding a seminar on "How to Win and Invest in the Philippine Stock Market" on July 20, at the Mondragon House, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. Lecturer is Irving Ackerman, president of I. Ackerman, Inc., one of the country's top stockholders, who will discuss the basic tenets of stock market investments. He will give tips on which stocks are doing well and which show potential in the market.

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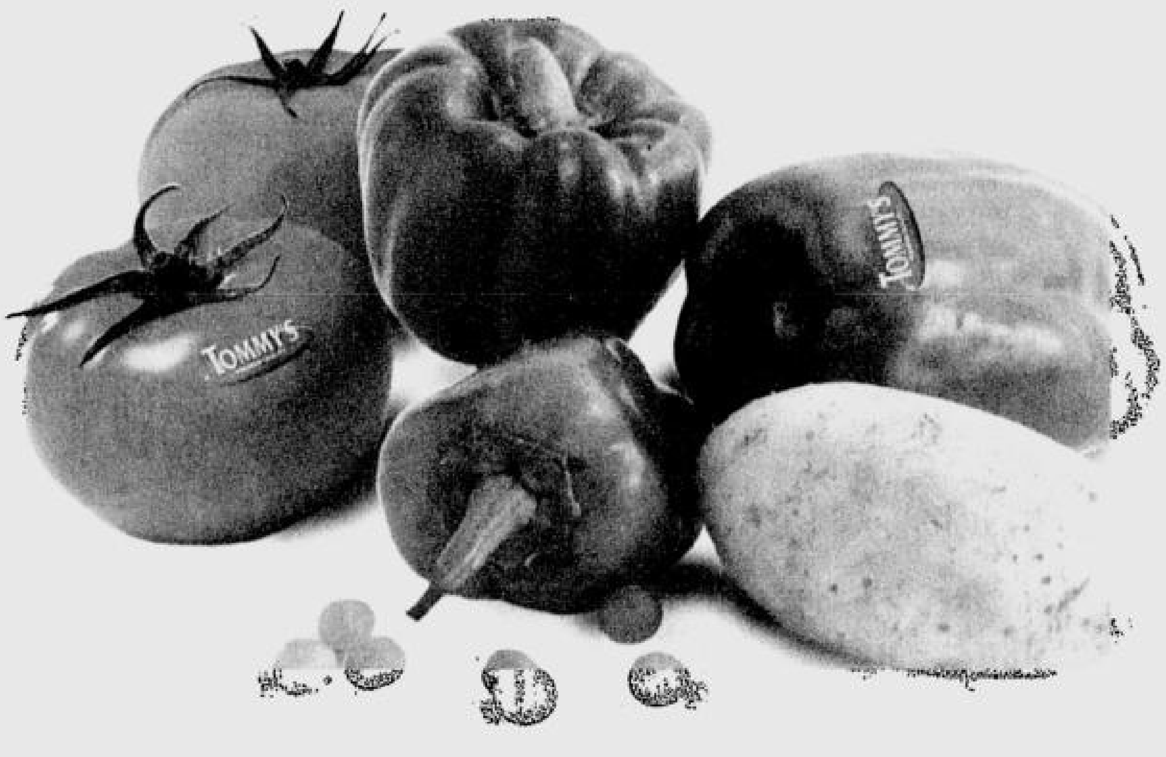

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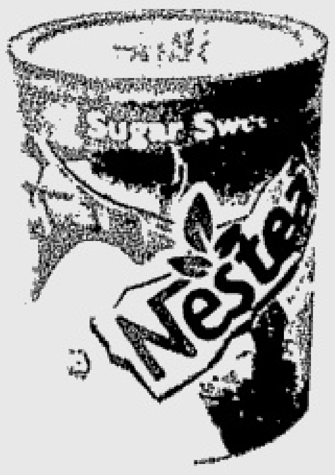

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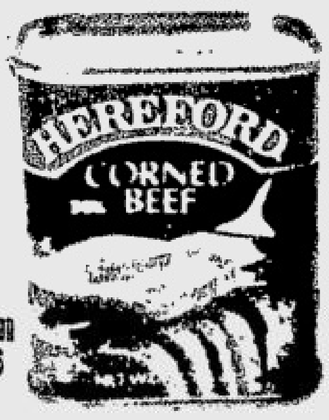

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Movie star looks

Basking in Sunshine

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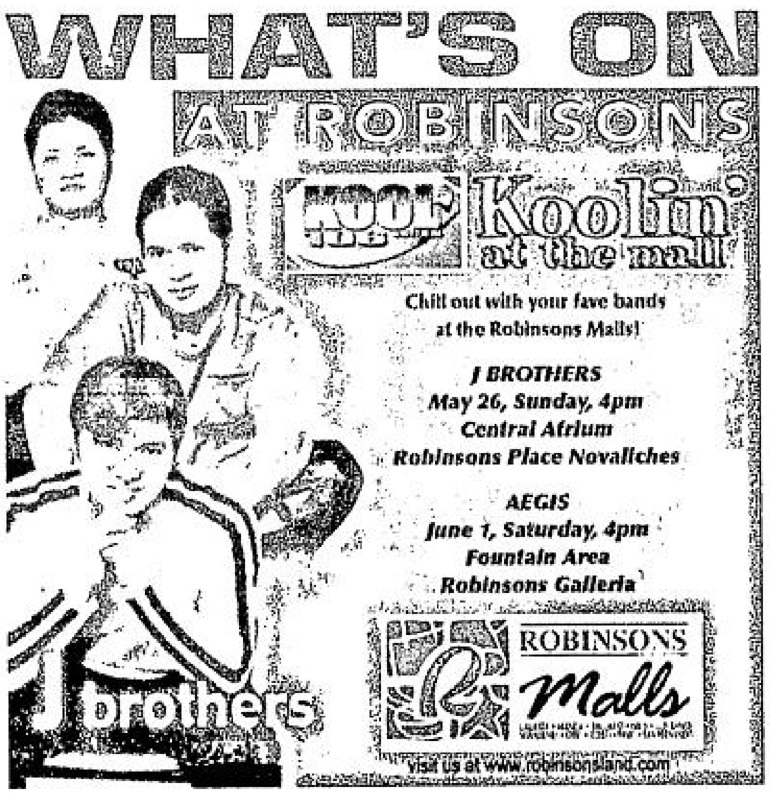
The infinity of Assunta's lips

Story on page F2

Art, death and Bali

Story on page F8



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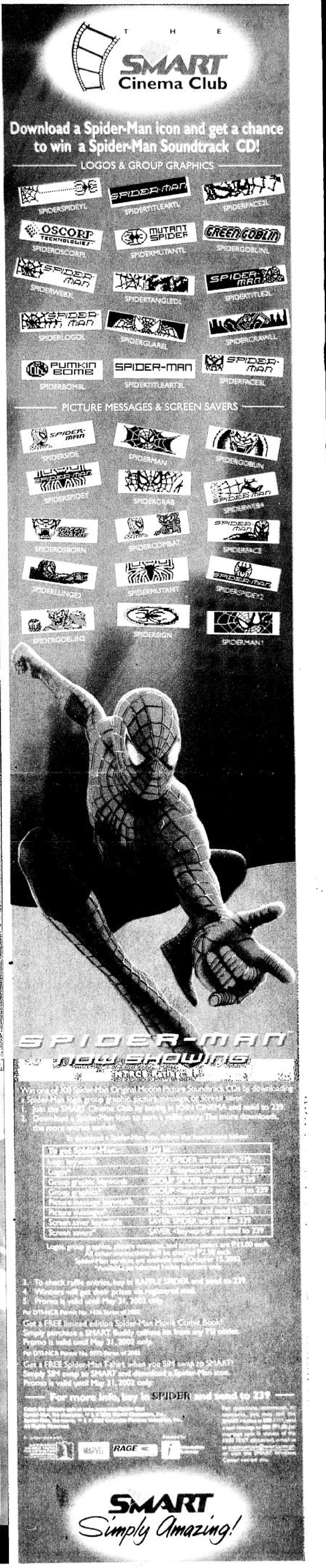
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3. To check raffle entries, key in RAFFLE SPIDER and send to 239.
4. Winners will get their prizes via registered mail.
5. Promo is valid until May 31, 2002 only.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. [illegible] Series of 2002
Get a FREE limited edition Spider-Man Movie Comic Book!
Simply purchase a SMART Buddy call card kit from any TSI outlet.
Promo is valid until May 31, 2002 only.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. [illegible] Series of 2002
Get a FREE Spider-Man T-shirt when you SIM swap to SMART!
Simply SIM swap to SMART and download a Spider-Man icon.
Promo is valid until May 31, 2002 only.
— For more info, key in SPIDER and send to 239 —
MARVEL RAGE
SMART Simply Amazing!

Of faith and fashion

TO promote outstanding Filipino products such as food items, furniture and home décor, weaves, accessories and perfumes, the Oblates of St. Joseph of Santuario de San Jose-East Greenhills, the Father Guido Colleti Foundation and Blessed Concepts Production present "Grandeur Opus" on May 28 at Le Pavilion, Roxas Boulevard corner EDSA. The trade exhibit is open at 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

"Grandeur Opus" also showcases the haute couture collections of Patis Tesoro, Dita Sandico-Ong and Malu Veloso in an invitational fashion show, which starts at 7 p.m.

With this undertaking, the Oblates of St. Joseph-East Greenhills hopes to raise funds to start construction of a parish church, a center for family formation and a parochial school for the youth in Jaro, Iloilo.

PATIS Tesoro's filipiniana gown

MALU Veloso's romantic bridal piece

DITA Sandico-Ong's banana wrap linens in white and gray tube gown

BADDEO updates the *alampay* and turns it into romantic picture collars, worn over a *tapis* and skirt in jewel tones.

Creating lasting fashion impressions

CELADON Asian Cuisine in Eastwood City Walk, with Behind the Scene Productions, presents "Blocmode...The Ultimate Fashion Forecast in Style." Directed by Ricci Reyes Ang and organized by Arnold Cruz, the show is where you can find everything you need to create your own style. Clothes from designer Eddie Baddeo and fashion labels Replay, Mango and Nothing but Water will be featured.

The garden setting will be illuminated with fanciful candles designed by Balay Kandila. Videography by Smart Shots and high-tech digital photography by Louie Allan Photography.

Dinner starts at 8 p.m. on May 30, to be followed by the fashion show at 9 p.m.

MODELS:
MARICRIS PEREZ AND TINA VINOYA
PHOTOS:
EDWARD DE LA CUESTA
LOCATION:
VILLA ESCUDERO, QUEZON PROVINCE
CHOREOGRAPHER:
NOELLE BOADO

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Silver house marks 10th year

SILVERWORKS, known for its innovative silver fashion accessories, marks its 10th anniversary with a special promotion.

For a minimum P500 single-receipt purchase on regular priced items, you get a P100 discount coupon, which you can use for your next P500 purchase.

Silverworks also introduces its new image model, Katrina Guidoti, a 19-year-old hotel, restaurant and institution management student.

Silverworks items include earrings, rings, necklaces and bracelets, as well as sterling silver studs, pendants, toe-rings and stainless steel body jewelry.

Silverworks shops are at Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place, Robinsons Metro East, and Robinsons Star Mills-Pampanga.

BOLD bangles with colored stones to go with this bold look! Wear them with this multiple strand lariat necklace, and top that look with solid Figaro necklaces on your hair or on your wrist.

ALTERNATE leather and silver tube chokers with geometric black onyx pendants. Pair them with triple stick dangling earrings and you'll be raring to go!

Aklan aims to be center of hand-woven fabric industry

THE RECENT Aklan Fiber Festival at the Augusto B. Legaspi (ABL) Sports Complex in Kalibo, Aklan, has established the province as a major source of hand-woven fabrics in the Philippines.

The weeklong festival, April 22-28, generated a sale of Pl,591,626.45, including P310,279 in booked orders. As to be expected, the loom weaving/craft sector was the top earner with total sales of P469,220 (P300,836.00 cash sale and P168,384 booked orders). The cutflower/ornamental sector had sales totaling P385,797.25 while the furniture sector earned P221,590.

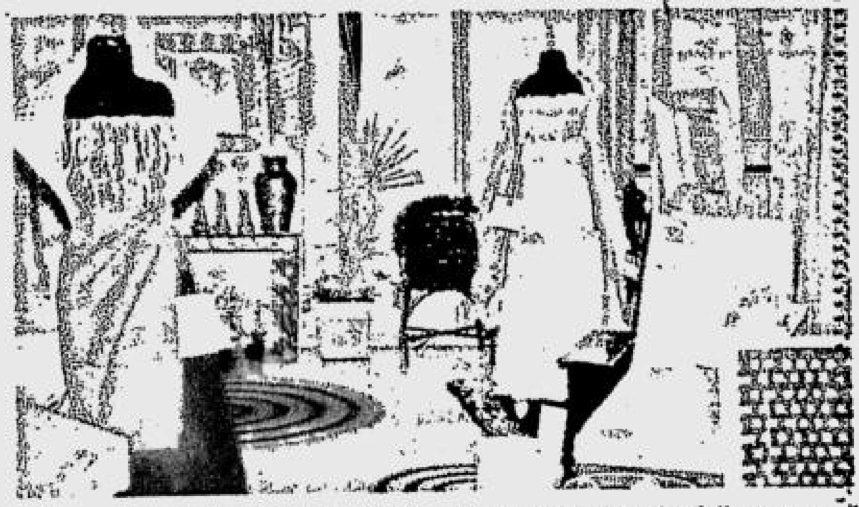
The booths of 17 local government units generated total cash sales of P198,198.20. The food-processing sector accounted had sales of P182,381 while the food festival earned P134,440.

75 exhibitors representing different sectors including the Aklan State University and Agrarian Reform Communities, participated in this year's festivities.

Buyers included Congresswoman and exporter Connie Dy and Lory Lua of Pasay City; Mario Nazareno of Rattan Pacifica and Alice Garces of APY Cane Inc., Mandaue City; Leny Eria of SM City; Robert F. Lane of Silahis Arts, Parañaque; Rosalina Abregana of Lufano International, Cebu City; Rex Dagdag of the Iloilo Furniture Manufacturers Association; and Mona Padilla of Asian Vine Furniture, Lapu-lapu City.

The Department of Trade and Industry attributed the success of this year's festival to the full support of provincial and local government officials, national government agencies and the private sector such as the Association of Partners for Fairer Trade Inc., Hugod Aklanon Producers Association Inc. and the Aklan Pina Manufacturers and Traders Association.

The weeklong celebration put Aklan in the map as the handloom center of the country, with *piña* as the Queen of locally woven fabrics.



VICE Governor Jean Rodriguez, APFTI deputy director Nette Ocampo, Rep. Gabrielle V. Calizo, Makao Mayor Wayne Malilay, DTI undersecretary Nelly Villafuerte, Nabas Mayor Gladys Garcia, Gov. Florencio Miraflores, India Legaspi, DTI provincial director Ermelinda Pollentes

Living with an unloving wife

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PREMIERE CITY CLUB

DEAR Tita Dulce,

Several years ago, I read in your column a letter from a neglected husband. Well, my situation now is exactly like his.

I have been neglected and ignored as if I am only a piece of furniture by my wife ever since we were married 14 years ago. I am not an irresponsible husband. My wife knows that I have been giving her and our children care and attention, enough material provisions and spiritual guidance.

As an executive, I am giving her a status not one of her workmates can claim of. Different kinds of communications were already tried so that she can react positively, but to no avail. My responses to her insensitivity were direct negative reaction that would lead to quarrels. She refuses to understand that the causes of my outbursts were her insensitivity to my needs, both emotional and physical.

Lately, I learned to become complacent. My extramarital affairs increased in numbers since from them I get the best sexual fulfillment. One of these affairs I consider serious, because we both need each other; she is a neglected wife.

Consequently, or maybe because my wife did listen to advice from her sisters and friends, there was an improvement. Lately, she has been trying to make herself available for sex. But after our dispassionate sex, she would revert back to her old ways; she does not want my skin to have contact with hers after that, not even an inch away.

There are simple little things I really like to get from her—concern for my dinner when I get home from work, a kiss when I leave for work, and a touch when I am near her. After our three-year relationship as boyfriend-girlfriend, I never heard her say "I love you" again. I only hear those words from my three children, a consolation.

Is she neglecting me because she does not love me?

EXN

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

From what you have stated, it does seem like she does not love you. The first rule for a loving wife is to be nice to come home to. The "simple little things" you want to get from her should remind all wives reading this column today that they should provide them to their husbands.

You are doing your best to be a good provider. That is being a good husband and father. I suppose you are legally married, so remember your wedding vows. You will, of course, have a quick answer to that: You are beleaguered with reasons for having extramarital affairs. There are, of course, two sides to every coin, and there is a saying that there is no evil that does not produce good. However, that last phrase can be contested anytime.

Complications may result from that affair with the neglected wife, which will call for a baptism. Just go by the calendar every time, if this answer cannot stop you.

To answer your last question: yes, she neglects you because she does not feel love for you. However, one should never judge a person until you know what he or she has been through. What has happened in the past that has made her a cold mate? She surely felt love for you, or else she would not have agreed to be your wife. It is possible that something in the past, before you met her, is the reason for being what she is now.

What you two need now is marriage counseling. Since you live outside of Luzon, I do not know marriage counselors there. I suggest that you consult psychiatrists. They could delve into the reasons of what bothers you. If your problems continue, one of your friends might suggest annulment.

As a final recourse, why not woo your wife again? Give her flowers, invite her to watch a movie with you after having dinner in a fine restaurant. As you know, every problem has a solution, and what is destined to be, will be. Good luck.

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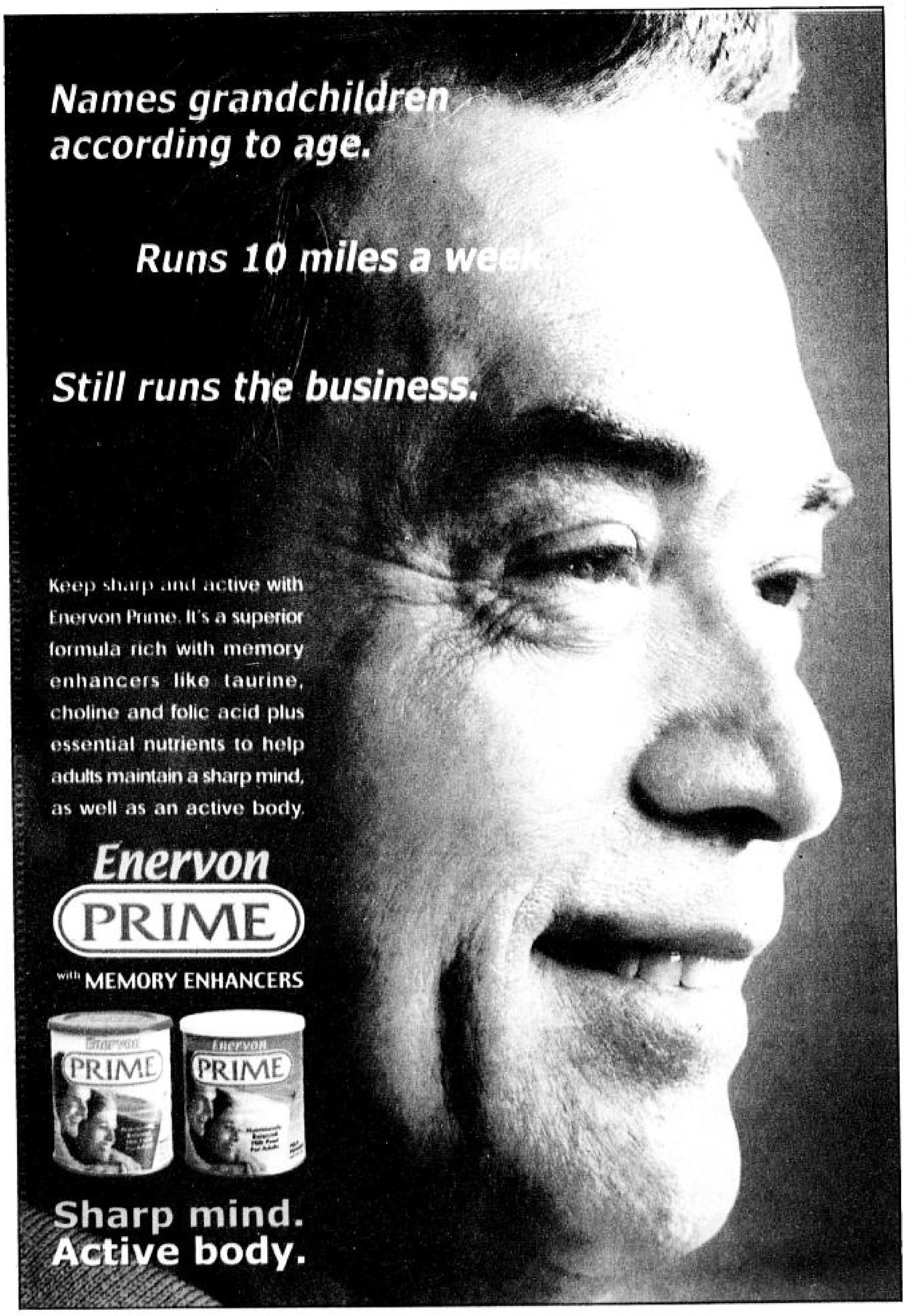
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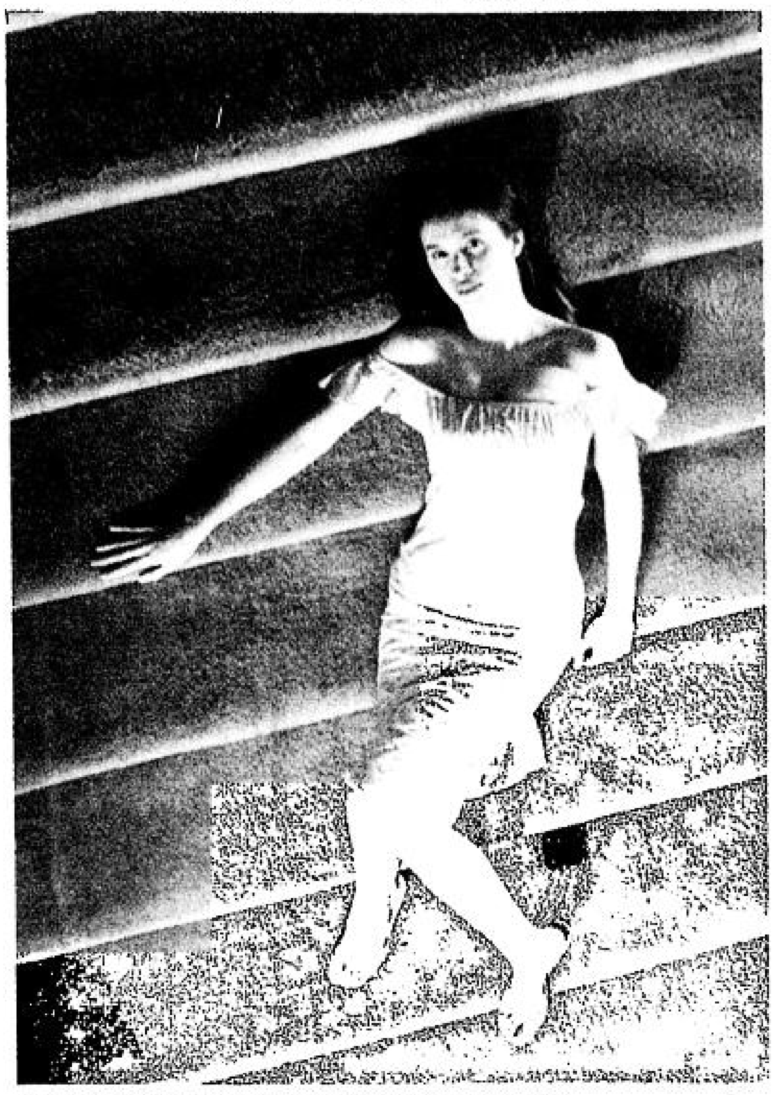
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
LIFESTYLE

PRINTED ruffled georgette wraparound dress with knitted inner lace accent



PINK peasant cotton top with printed bias skirt

FLORAL smock ruffled sleeves top with aqua stretch pants

Basking in Sunshine

PRINTED georgette sleeveless drawstring top with crochet accent, paired with black pants

Text by Leah Salterio
Photos by Mike Alquinto

SUNSHINE Cruz steps on the weighing scale in her bedroom on a Monday morning and is instantly alarmed. She has gained 3 pounds. She steps on the scale again. There is no mistaking it. "Bad news, sweetheart," she tells husband Cesar Montano.

But the 3 pounds hardly show, and would have been understandable in someone who has just given birth.

"I don't want to look like his mother if I'm beside Buboy, especially since my husband is very macho and good-looking," says the 24-year-old Sunshine, who is 14 years Cesar's junior.

> Motherhood has hardly made a dent in Sunshine Cruz's awesome bod

MAKEUP BY JINKY ILUSORIO
LOCATION: EDSA SHANGRI-LA HOTEL

"I'm super conscious about my appearance. I don't want to hear people saying that I'm a mother now that's why I gained weight. It's best to show them that you can look good even after having a baby."

After giving birth in September last year, Sunshine stopped eating rice. "And if I had to eat meat, I only cooked grilled chicken breast. It worked for me. Today, I eat rice once in a while. I still watch my food intake and maintain a diet," she says.

Little wonder that eight years since first endorsing the Petit Monde brand, Sunshine is still at it. This time, she's pushing the Petit Monde Women collection.

"Sunshine is everything we want a Petit Monde woman to be, someone who is confident, independent, an epitome of beauty, style and happiness," says Dorothy Tan-Tionson of Petit Monde.

The collection features the '60s romantic and gypsy look in cool and chic materials that women can wear just about everywhere—in the office, to restaurants or the malls.

The corporate look, on the other hand, is composed mostly of business casual wear and a melding of formal business and casual wear.

For Sunshine, having a fashion sense is not only wearing up-to-date or trendy clothes, but also wearing the right and comfortable ones.

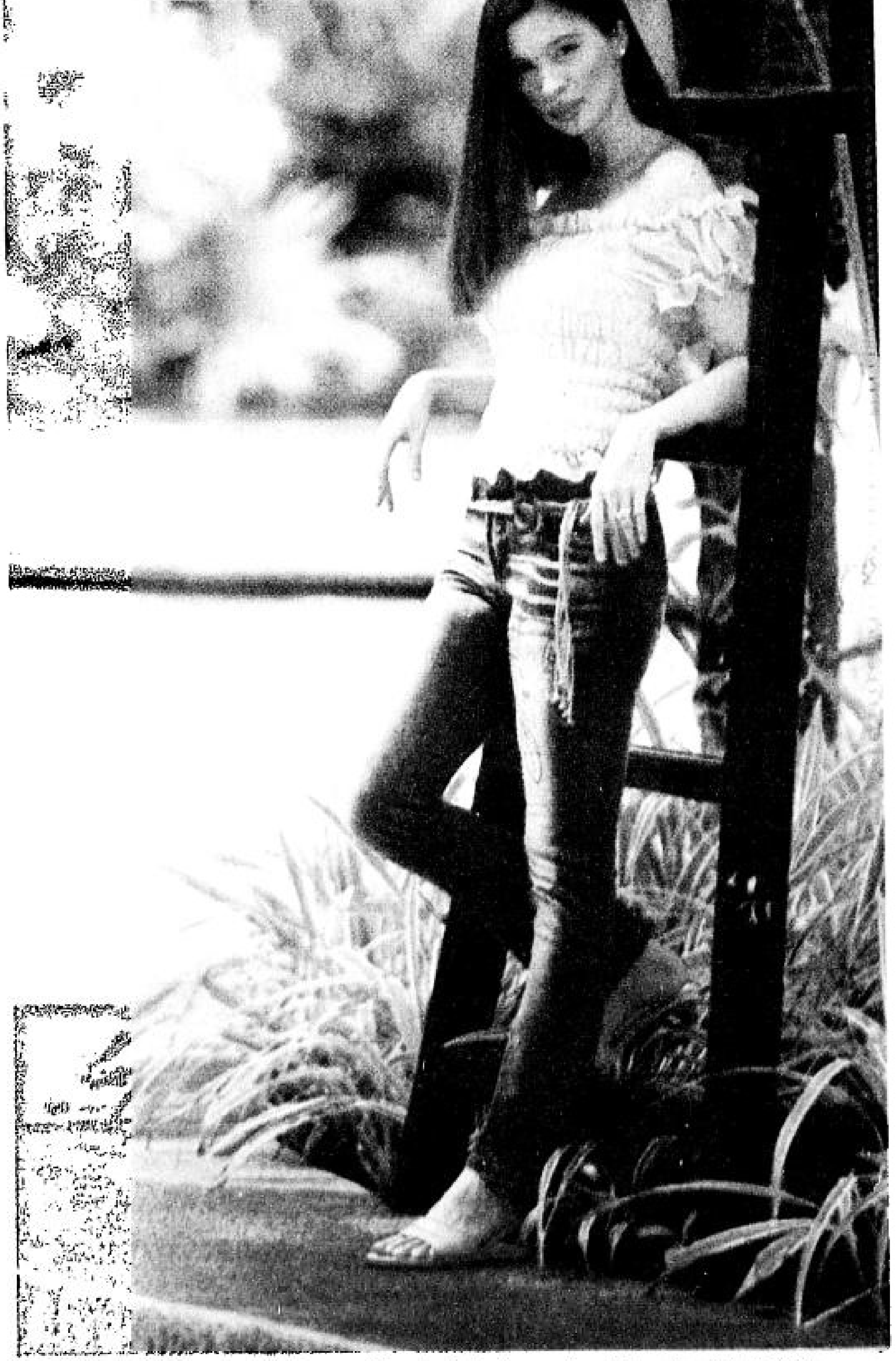
She points out it is important the women wear clothes that actually suit them, with colors that make them feel and look good.

"Many women end up as fashion victims by wearing what they see on TV or in fashion magazines," Sunshine says. "Being fashionable is also about being mindful of how you would actually look in that dress."

Sunshine admits women need not spend a fortune on signature brands to look good.

"It's all a matter of choosing what style suits you," she says. "Dress and act according to your personality and you will discover the

RUFFLED cotton off-shoulder blouse with red floral embroidery and laced-up denim pants



SMOCK off-shoulder top and stone-bleached denim pants with embroidery studs, accentuated with flower leather belt harmony and balance with your inner self."

Sunshine is one of the best-dressed actresses in show biz. Just recently, she was adjudged Star of the Night during the Famas Awards. She was glamorous in an Eric Pineda strapless gown with draped bodice and bustle made of monochromatic Italian satin. She knew how to finish off the look, with a pair of long gloves and diamond earrings.

No more sexy clothes

The former sexy actress, who put the male population on overdrive with her eye-popping figure, has also made a conscious effort to stop wearing revealing clothes.

"That's self-imposed," Sunshine says. "It's just right for someone like me who already has a kid and a husband."

Since getting married, Sunshine has also given up show biz to become a full-time homemaker. She believes in the traditional marital setup where the husband has to work while the wife keeps home. Occasionally, she can be talked into making guest appearances on TV, but such times are rare.

She gave birth last year to daughter Angelina Isabel, now 7 months old. The baby was named after Hollywood babe Angelina Jolie, who is Sunshine and Cesar's favorite actress, while Isabel was taken from a street in Sta. Ana, Manila, where Cesar grew up.

"We make it a point that one of us stays home with her," Sunshine says. "We don't want to be out together for long periods of time. One of us has to stay to take care of her. Even at night, the baby sleeps in a crib in our room."

Best and worst

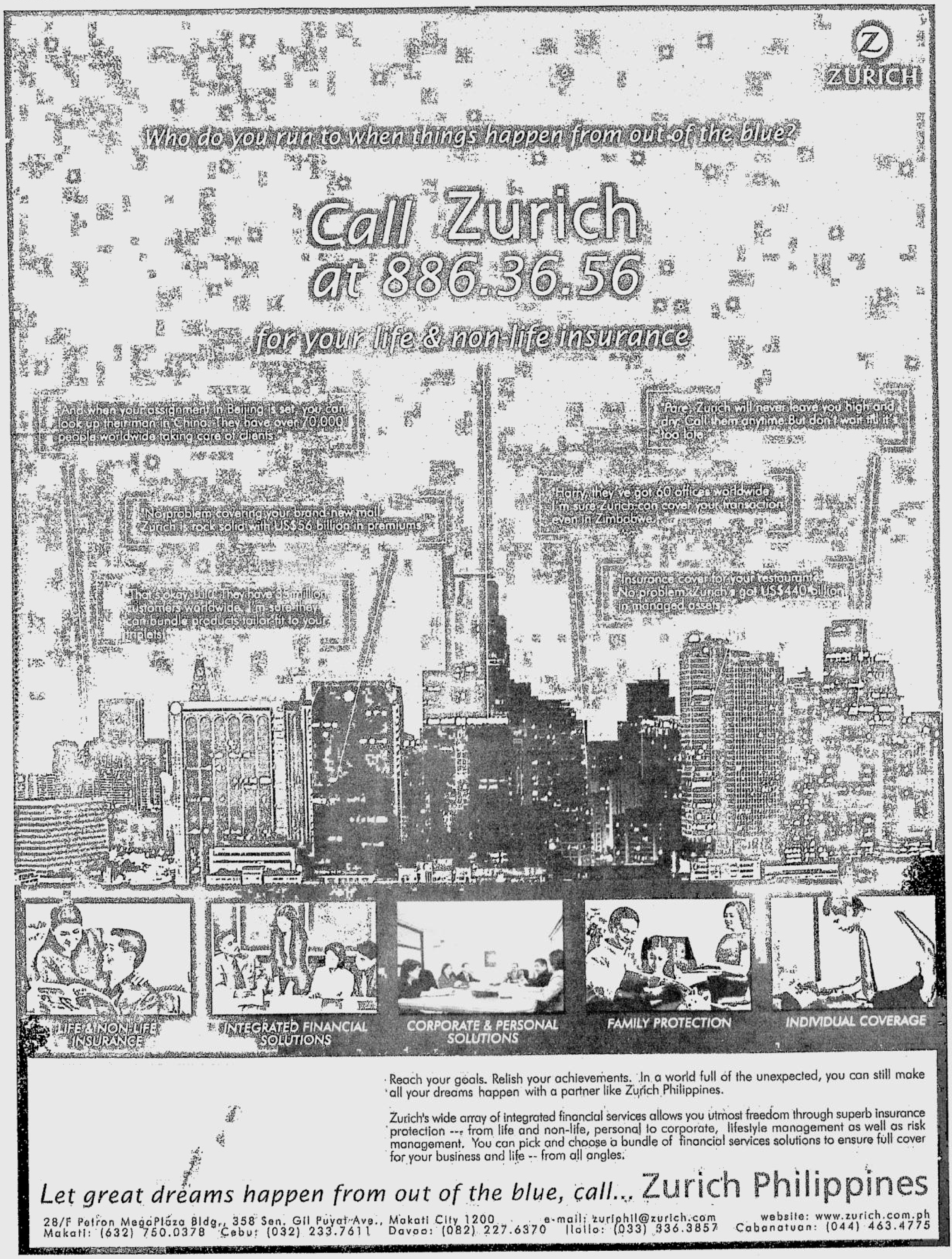
Sunshine admits she has learned to accept the best and the worst of married life.

"The best part is there's someone beside you when you sleep at night, someone you can hug," she explains. "There's also the baby to play with. But even if there's a worst part, I've learned to live with it. I love Cesar. I've learned to accept his flaws."

Cesar went with her to Bangkok last month when she did a fashion pictorial for Petit Monde.

"So it's not true that we've been separated for one month now, like what has been written about," Sunshine says.

SLEEVELESS cotton lacy top matched with white cotton stretch pants and ethnic belt



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Harry, they've got 60 offices worldwide. I'm sure Zurich can cover your transaction even in Zimbabwe.
That's okay, Lulu. They have 35 million customers worldwide. I'm sure they can bundle products tailor-fit to your [illegible]
Insurance cover for your restaurant? No problem. Zurich's got US$440 billion in managed assets.
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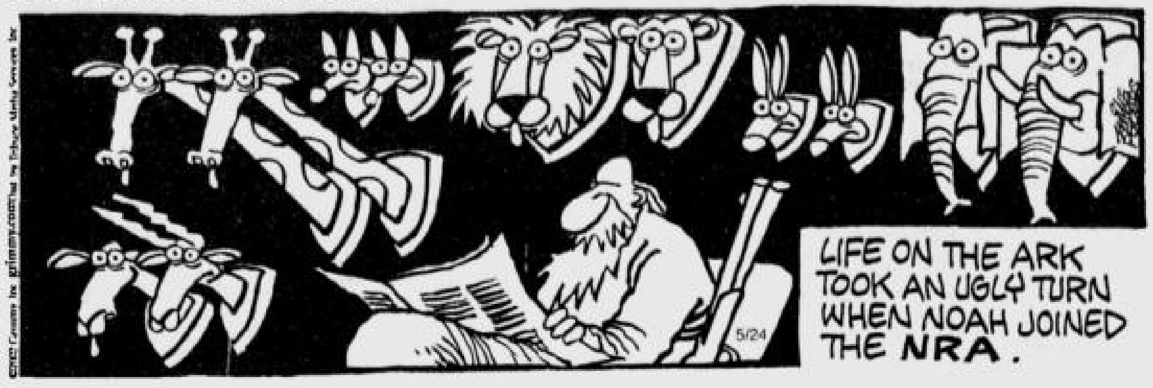
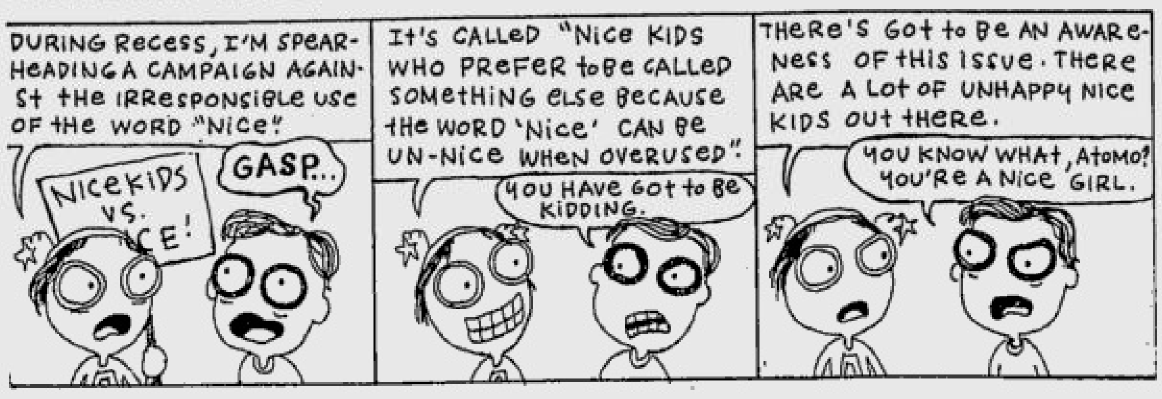
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


LIFE ON THE ARK TOOK AN UGLY TURN WHEN NOAH JOINED THE NRA.
5/24

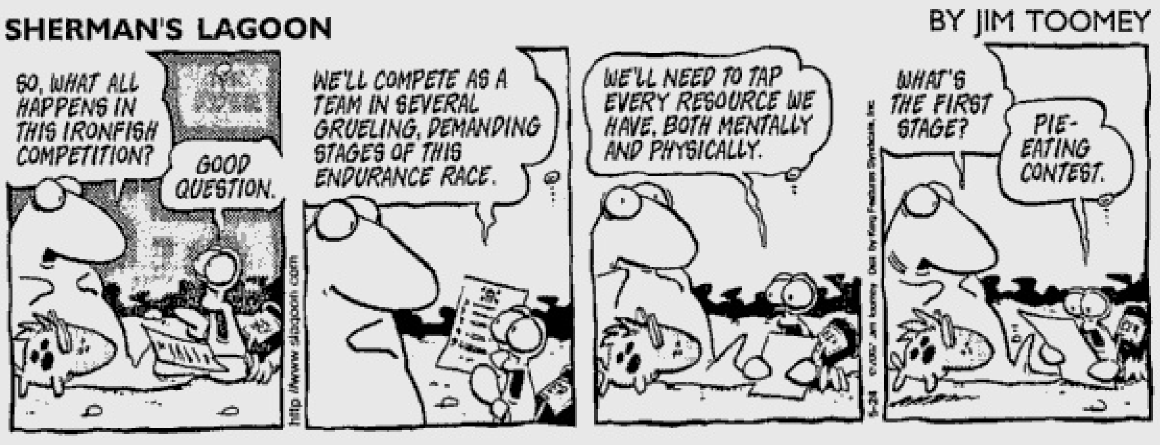
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


DURING RECESS, I'M SPEARHEADING A CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE IRRESPONSIBLE USE OF THE WORD "NICE."
NICE KIDS VS. ...CE!
GASP...
IT'S CALLED "NICE KIDS WHO PREFER TO BE CALLED SOMETHING ELSE BECAUSE THE WORD 'NICE' CAN BE UN-NICE WHEN OVERUSED".
YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING.
THERE'S GOT TO BE AN AWARENESS OF THIS ISSUE. THERE ARE A LOT OF UNHAPPY NICE KIDS OUT THERE.
YOU KNOW WHAT, ATOMO? YOU'RE A NICE GIRL.

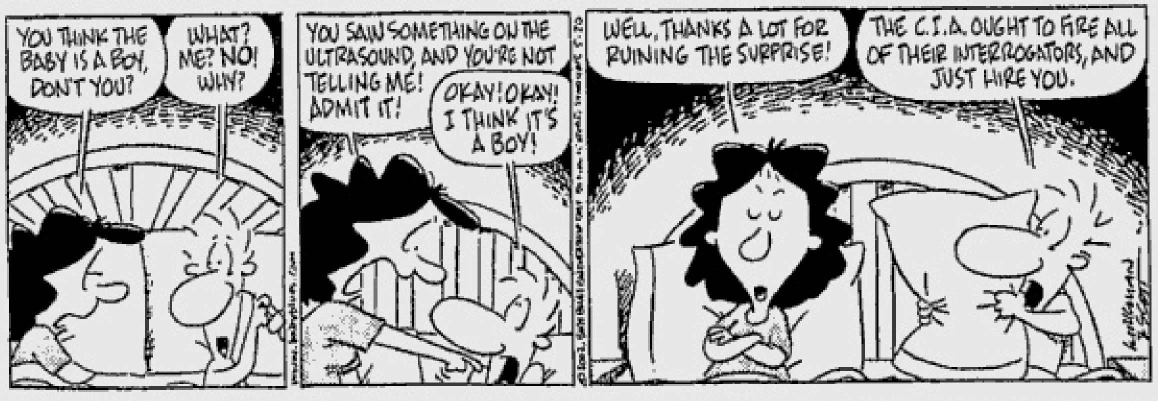
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


SO, WHAT ALL HAPPENS IN THIS IRONFISH COMPETITION?
GOOD QUESTION.
WE'LL COMPETE AS A TEAM IN SEVERAL GRUELING, DEMANDING STAGES OF THIS ENDURANCE RACE.
WE'LL NEED TO TAP EVERY RESOURCE WE HAVE, BOTH MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY.
WHAT'S THE FIRST STAGE?
PIE-EATING CONTEST.
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YOU THINK THE BABY IS A BOY, DON'T YOU?
WHAT? ME? NO! WHY?
YOU SAW SOMETHING ON THE ULTRASOUND, AND YOU'RE NOT TELLING ME! ADMIT IT!
OKAY! OKAY! I THINK IT'S A BOY!
WELL, THANKS A LOT FOR RUINING THE SURPRISE!
THE C.I.A. OUGHT TO FIRE ALL OF THEIR INTERROGATORS, AND JUST HIRE YOU.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Bob Dylan, Priscilla Presley, Patti LaBelle

Happy Birthday: You will move into the role of leadership regarding personal financial affairs this year. You should take a serious look at investments, wills or any other personal papers. You will be in the mood for romance; set aside some time to rekindle the flame or to get out and meet the perfect mate if you are single. Your numbers are 13, 19, 25, 33, 37, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Get physical and work that body a little bit. The more you do to get in shape the better you'll feel. Health and welfare should be at the top of your list today.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Gossip will only lead to problems. Keep your thoughts to yourself and you won't have to answer to anyone who doesn't happen to share your opinion.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You'll have opportunities to make career changes today if you are quick to react to positions being posted. Don't forget to take extra care of yourself.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): This is a great day to socialize. Invite friends over to share the comforts of your home. Your interest regarding a new hobby will grow if others share your passion.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may be in the doghouse if someone close to you doesn't like the way you have been handling your responsibilities. Get busy and do things that will make up for the time you have neglected your duties.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can make new friends or get to know some of the people you recently met much better. Your interaction with others will spark great ideas that will help you to help others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Spend a little extra time on a project you believe in and you'll be on your way to success. Your insight coupled with your determination should help you get the support you're looking for.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Empty promises are likely. Don't be disappointed if someone you care about lets you down. He or she probably doesn't realize how you feel.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Travel will promote new interests and bring added knowledge. You can make professional changes or look into options that will lead to a small business venture. Trust in yourself.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You will have some tremendous ideas for making money. Get moving before someone else walks off with your idea. The people you meet through a club will lead you astray if you aren't careful.

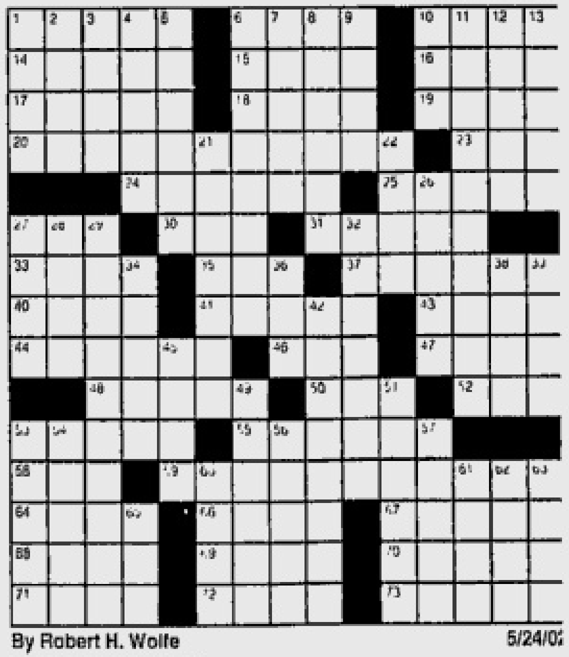
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will be feeling sensitive and vulnerable today. You mustn't overreact or take drastic measures to get things done. Get busy with a hobby or other creative project.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You'll be in a curious mood today. Don't hesitate to join in group conversations. Your desire to learn and to discover different lifestyles and traditions will lead to cultural events.

Birthday Baby: You will love to teach others and you will be good at it. You will have a real taste for luxury and will take great pleasure in socializing with others. You have a great curiosity about human nature.

DAILY CROSSWORD

IMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY

5/24/02

ACROSS
1 Cat weapons
6 "Death of a Salesman" character
10 Unfortunately
14 Spartan slave
15 For two, in music
16 Bonanza
17 Lead-in
18 Buster Brown's dog
19 Soft cheese
20 Ibsen's toy story?
23 Composer Rorem
24 Ustinov autobio
25 Island feasts
27 Simple bed
30 Sell-out letters
31 Yell at
33 Workplace watchdog grp.
35 Arab robe
37 Cleo's lover
40 Cordon __
41 Bar for lifting
43 Cad
44 Rhythmic rock
46 Moreover
47 Singer Moffo
48 Director of "The Pawnbroker"
50 Aunt in Alicante
52 Finnish twins?
53 Madagascar primate
55 Laudanum, e.g.
58 Periphery
59 Caldwell's story of unhealthy travel?
64 Quiz
66 Book increment
67 Lethal snake
68 Black in Paris
69 "Ain't She Sweet?" songwriter
70 European boot
71 Remnants
72 Scads
73 Rods' partners

DOWN
1 Aromatic annual plant
2 Allow to use
3 Singing voice
4 Planet
5 Neckwear
6 Loungewear
7 Language nuance
8 Musical forms
9 Charges
10 Priest's robe
11 Blackmore story about a cookie?
12 So long, Yves
13 Burpee buy
21 Name on a cake
22 North Carolina college
26 To an extreme
27 Tommy Lee Jones film
28 Norse capital
29 Wharton's story about a card game?
32 Of the heart
34 Soothsayer
36 Gardner of "Mogambo"
38 Sam or Trevor
39 Positive votes
42 Lurers
45 Copy: abbr.
49 Trinidad's partner
51 Bomb type
53 Actress Ryan
54 Cynthia of "Sex and the City"
56 "Love Me Tender" co-star
57 Frost's Muse
60 Fiery birthstone
61 Arab sultanate
62 Ready, willing and __
63 Time periods
65 "__ Robinson"

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

A	N	O	R	A	K	■	A	C	I	D	■	B	B	C
S	O	N	A	T	A	■	M	A	R	E	■	U	A	R
P	R	E	T	T	Y	W	O	M	A	N	■	E	T	A
■	■	■	I	N	S	E	C	R	E	T	■	N	I	B
S	P	I	N	■	■	T	O	Y	■	E	W	O	K	S
K	I	N	G	O	F	■	■	■	A	D	E	S	■	■
E	X	E	■	A	L	C	A	P	P	■	A	A	A	A
W	I	S	H	F	U	L	T	H	I	N	K	I	N	G
S	E	C	Y	■	E	R	M	I	N	E	■	R	I	A
■	■	A	D	O	S	■	■	■	G	O	W	E	S	T
C	A	P	E	S	■	D	I	M	■	■	I	S	E	E
U	L	A	■	P	R	I	C	E	T	A	G	■	■	■
R	I	B	■	R	I	C	H	A	R	D	G	E	R	E
V	A	L	■	E	C	T	O	■	E	I	L	E	E	N
E	S	E	■	Y	E	A	R	■	S	T	E	E	L	S

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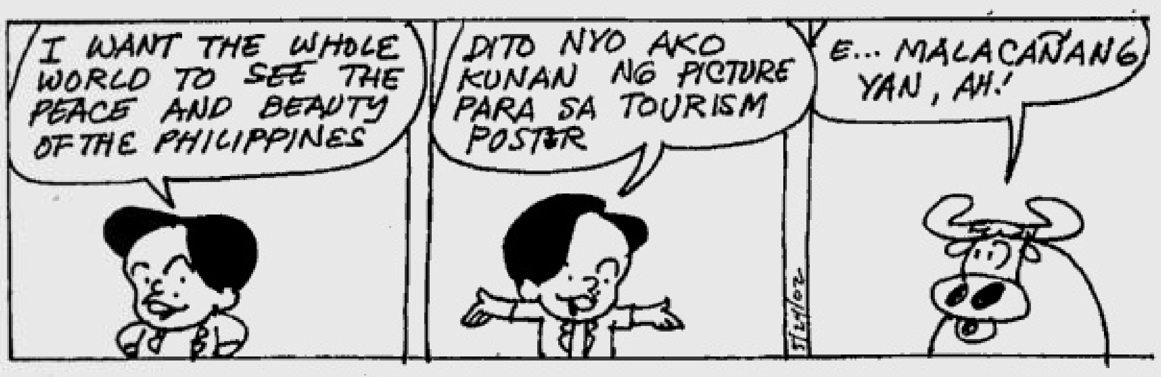
5/24/02

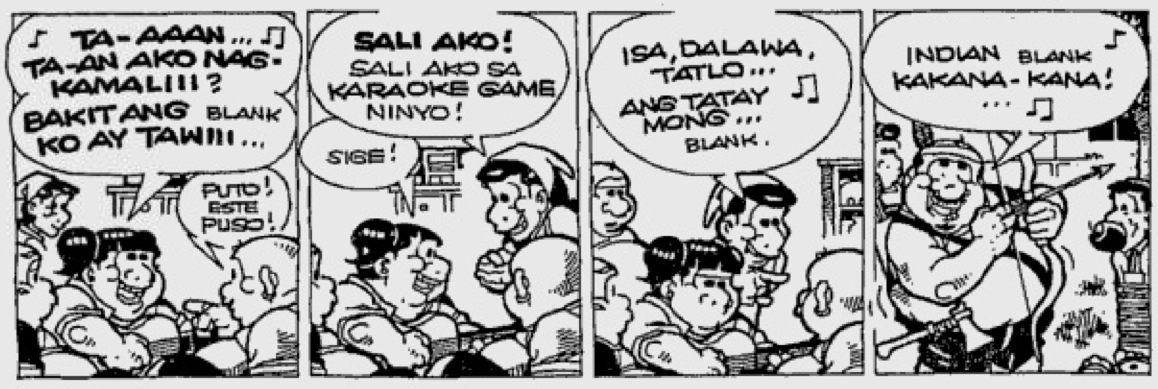
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


I WANT THE WHOLE WORLD TO SEE THE PEACE AND BEAUTY OF THE PHILIPPINES
DITO NYO AKO KUNAN NG PICTURE PARA SA TOURISM POSTER
E... MALACAÑANG YAN, AH!
5/24/02

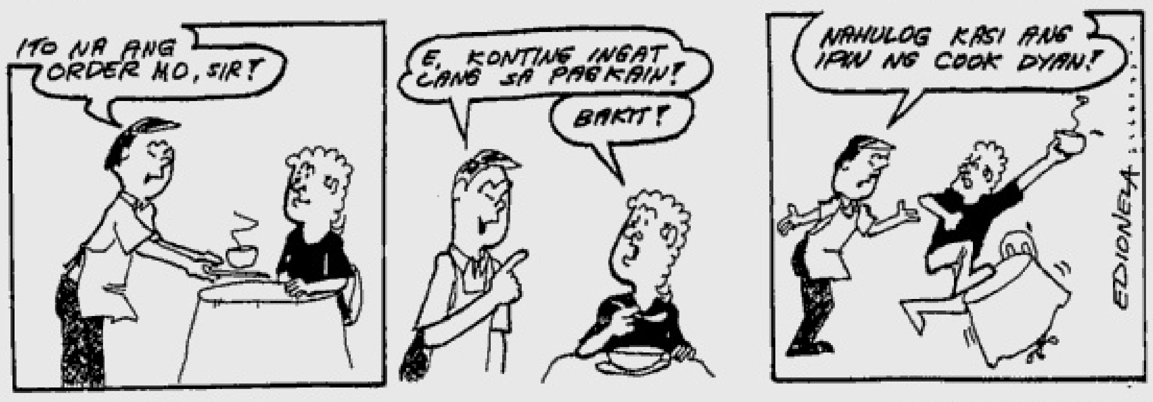
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


♪ TA-AAAN... ♫ TA-AN AKO NAGKAMALI!!? BAKIT ANG BLANK KO AY TAW!!!...
PUTO! ESTE PUSO!
SALI AKO! SALI AKO SA KARAOKE GAME NINYO!
SIGE!
ISA, DALAWA, TATLO... ANG TATAY MONG... BLANK. ♫
INDIAN BLANK KAKANA-KANA! ... ♫

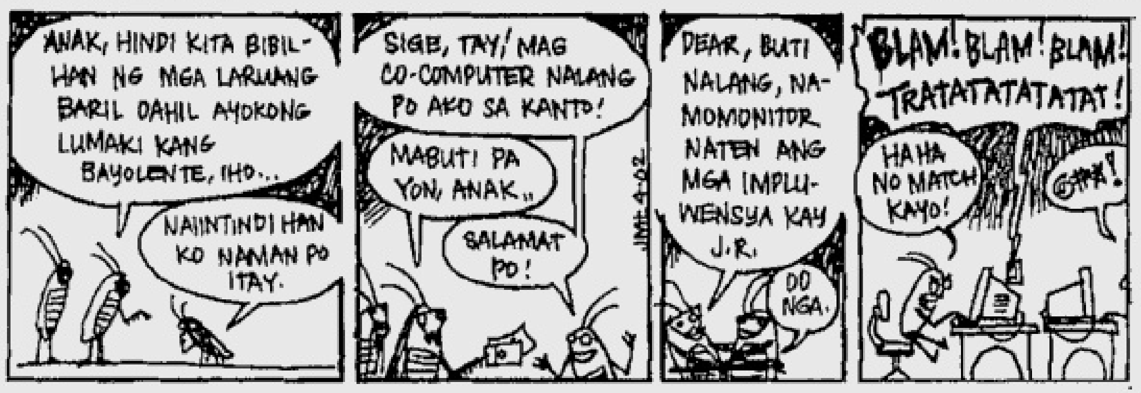
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ITO NA ANG ORDER MO, SIR?
E, KONTING INGAT LANG SA PAGKAIN!
BAKIT?
NAHULOG KASI ANG IPIN NG COOK DYAN!
EDIONELA

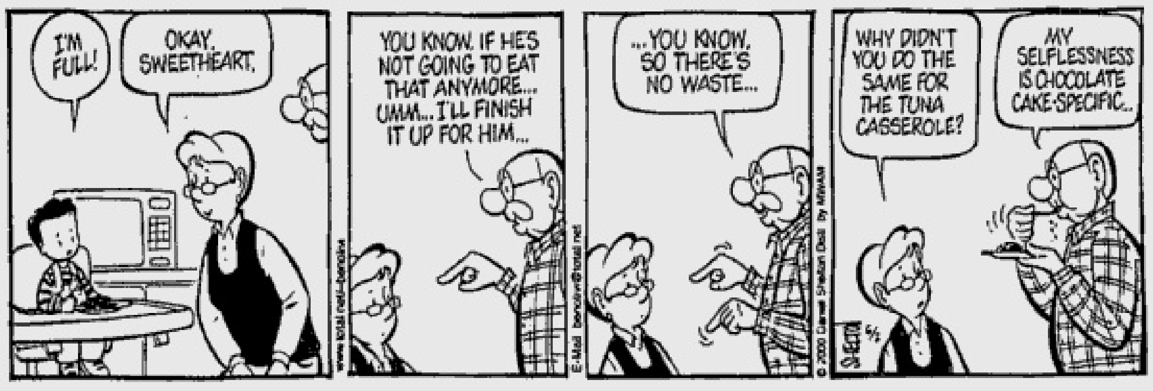
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANAK, HINDI KITA BIBILHAN NG MGA LARUANG BARIL DAHIL AYOKONG LUMAKI KANG BAYOLENTE, IHO...
NAIINTINDI HAN KO NAMAN PO ITAY.
SIGE, TAY! MAG CO-COMPUTER NALANG PO AKO SA KANTO!
MABUTI PA YON, ANAK..
SALAMAT PO!
DEAR, BUTI NALANG, NAMOMONITOR NATEN ANG MGA IMPLUWENSYA KAY J.R.
OO NGA.
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! TRATATATATATAT!
HAHA NO MATCH KAYO!
GRR!
JMT 4-02

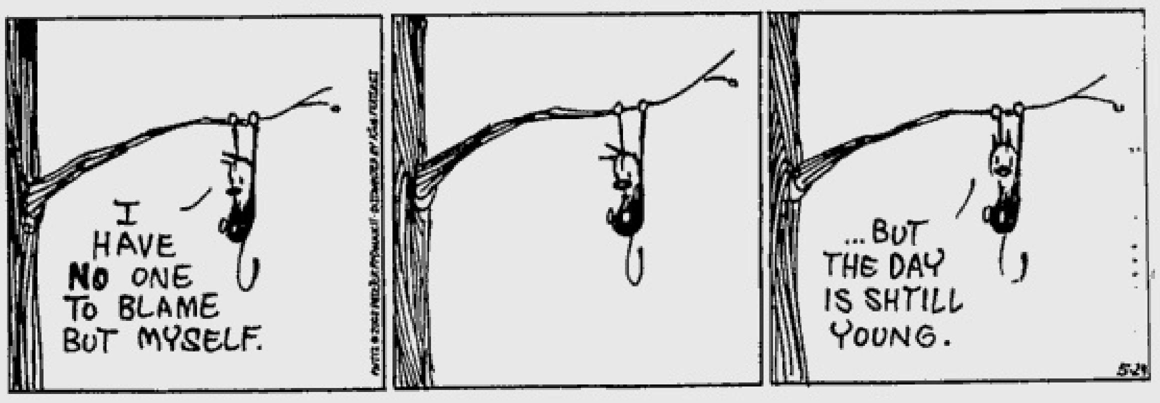
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I'M FULL!
OKAY, SWEETHEART.
YOU KNOW, IF HE'S NOT GOING TO EAT THAT ANYMORE... UMM... I'LL FINISH IT UP FOR HIM...
...YOU KNOW, SO THERE'S NO WASTE...
WHY DIDN'T YOU DO THE SAME FOR THE TUNA CASSEROLE?
MY SELFLESSNESS IS CHOCOLATE CAKE-SPECIFIC...

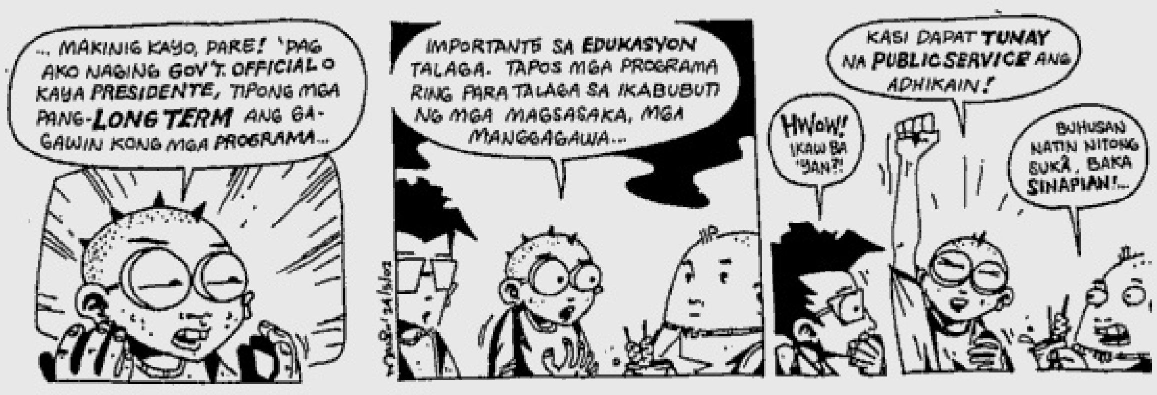
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I HAVE NO ONE TO BLAME BUT MYSELF.
...BUT THE DAY IS SHTILL YOUNG.
5-24

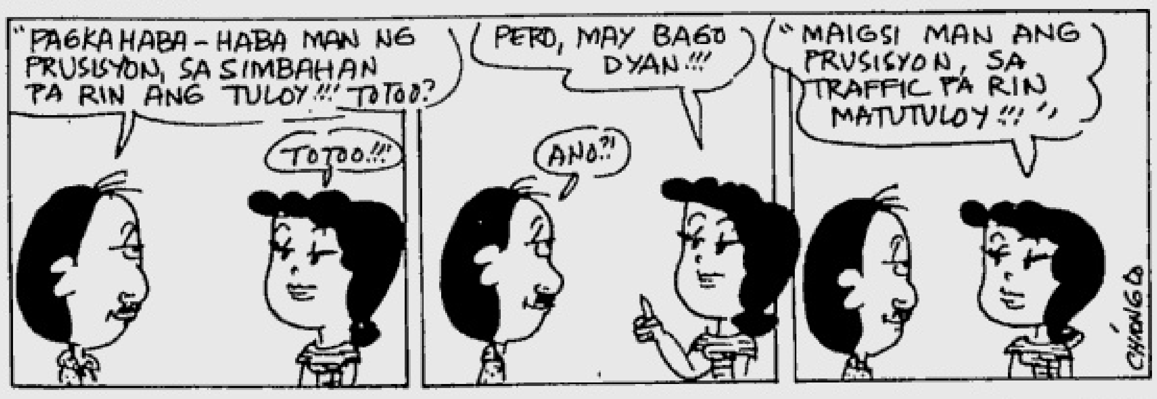
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


... MAKINIG KAYO, PARE! 'PAG AKO NAGING GOV'T. OFFICIAL O KAYA PRESIDENTE, TIPONG MGA PANG-LONG TERM ANG GAGAWIN KONG MGA PROGRAMA...
IMPORTANTE SA EDUKASYON TALAGA. TAPOS MGA PROGRAMA RING PARA TALAGA SA IKABUBUTI NG MGA MAGSASAKA, MGA MANGGAGAWA...
KASI DAPAT TUNAY NA PUBLIC SERVICE ANG ADHIKAIN!
HWOW! IKAW BA 'YAN?!
BUHUSAN NATIN NITONG SUKA, BAKA SINAPIAN!...

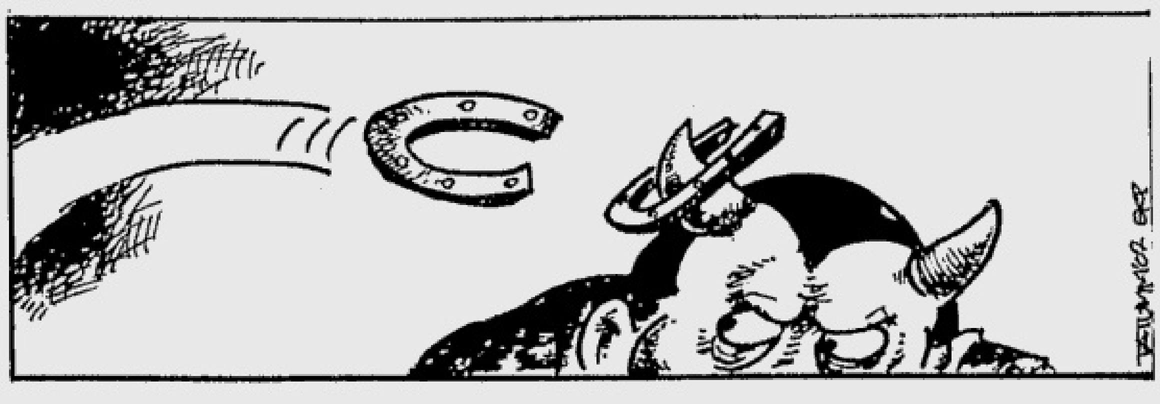
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


"PAGKAHABA-HABA MAN NG PRUSISYON, SA SIMBAHAN PA RIN ANG TULOY!!!" TOTOO?
TOTOO!!!
PERO, MAY BAGO DYAN!!!
ANO?!
"MAIGSI MAN ANG PRUSISYON, SA TRAFFIC PA RIN MATUTULOY!!!"
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



Italian fashion for yuppies

ON HER: Adele Fado striped backless top and pants, and Marina Gui red leather mules. On him, Guiducci long-sleeved shirt, Foster suit and black leather shoes by Wolf

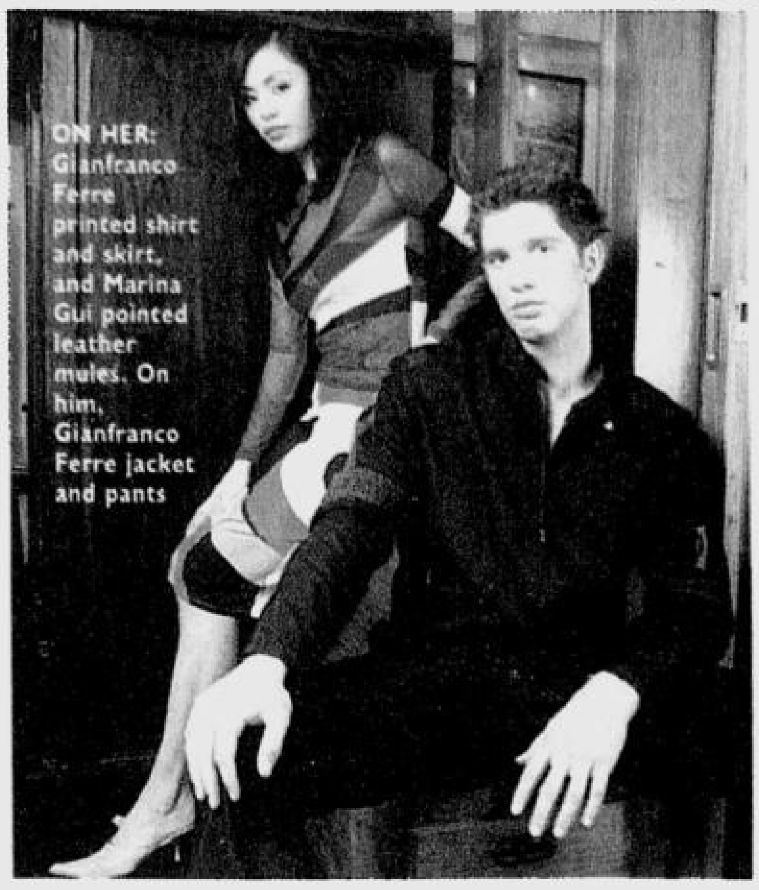
A SENSE of the classic with hints of modern sensibilities. Formal and fun in one interesting mix—they're Italian-made clothes tailored for the über-hip young professional and they're now available at Linea Italia shops.

Consider these: rhythmical colors on a Gianfranco Ferre long-sleeved top and knee-length skirt, apple green elegance on a Seventy blazer and capri pants; and classic vertical stripes on a backless top and pants from Adele Fado. To spice up the look, there are sexy mules from Versace and Marina Gui.

For men, there are dress shirts from Guiducci, suits from Foster, jackets and pants from Gianfranco Ferre and a wide selection of formal and casual shoes from Versace, Trussardi and Marco Gabriellini.

Check out your choices at Linea Italia 6750 in Ayala Avenue, Makati City; Versace Jeans Couture in Greenbelt; Prima Linea in Greenbelt, SM Megamall, and Ayala Center Cebu; Linea Italia in SM Megamall and Ayala Center Cebu; Linea Italia in SM Megamall, SM Cebu, and Park Square I, Uomo Tu in Greenbelt and Ayala Center, Ayala Center Cebu, and Viva in SM Megamall and SM Cebu.

APPLE green blazer and capri pants by Seventy. Necklace by Pinko



ON HER: Gianfranco Ferre printed shirt and skirt, and Marina Gui pointed leather mules. On him, Gianfranco Ferre jacket and pants

New bra boosts woman's confidence

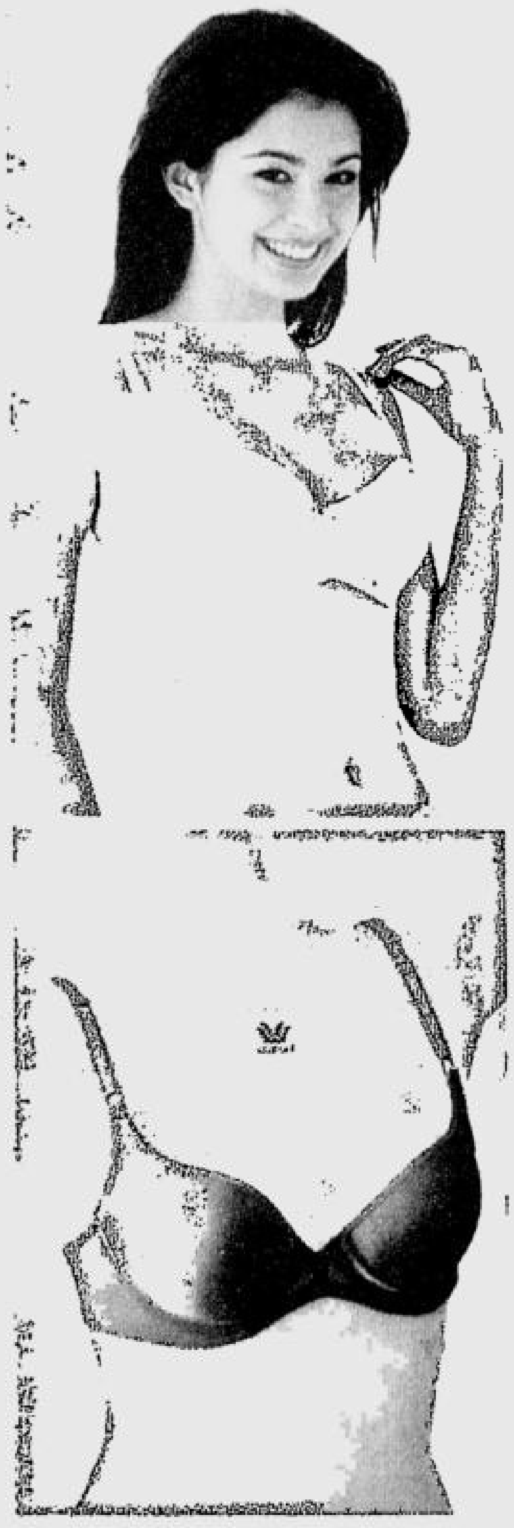
JAPAN'S Wacoal Corp. introduces this summer the Wacoal Air Cool Bra. The bra comes with a specially designed bust cup that channels airflow from under the bust line where heat and perspiration build up to the top of the breast. This product's unique feature includes a mesh-like material at the edge of the bra that lets the air pass through, providing a cooling effect on the breast and countering the accumulation of perspiration under the bust.

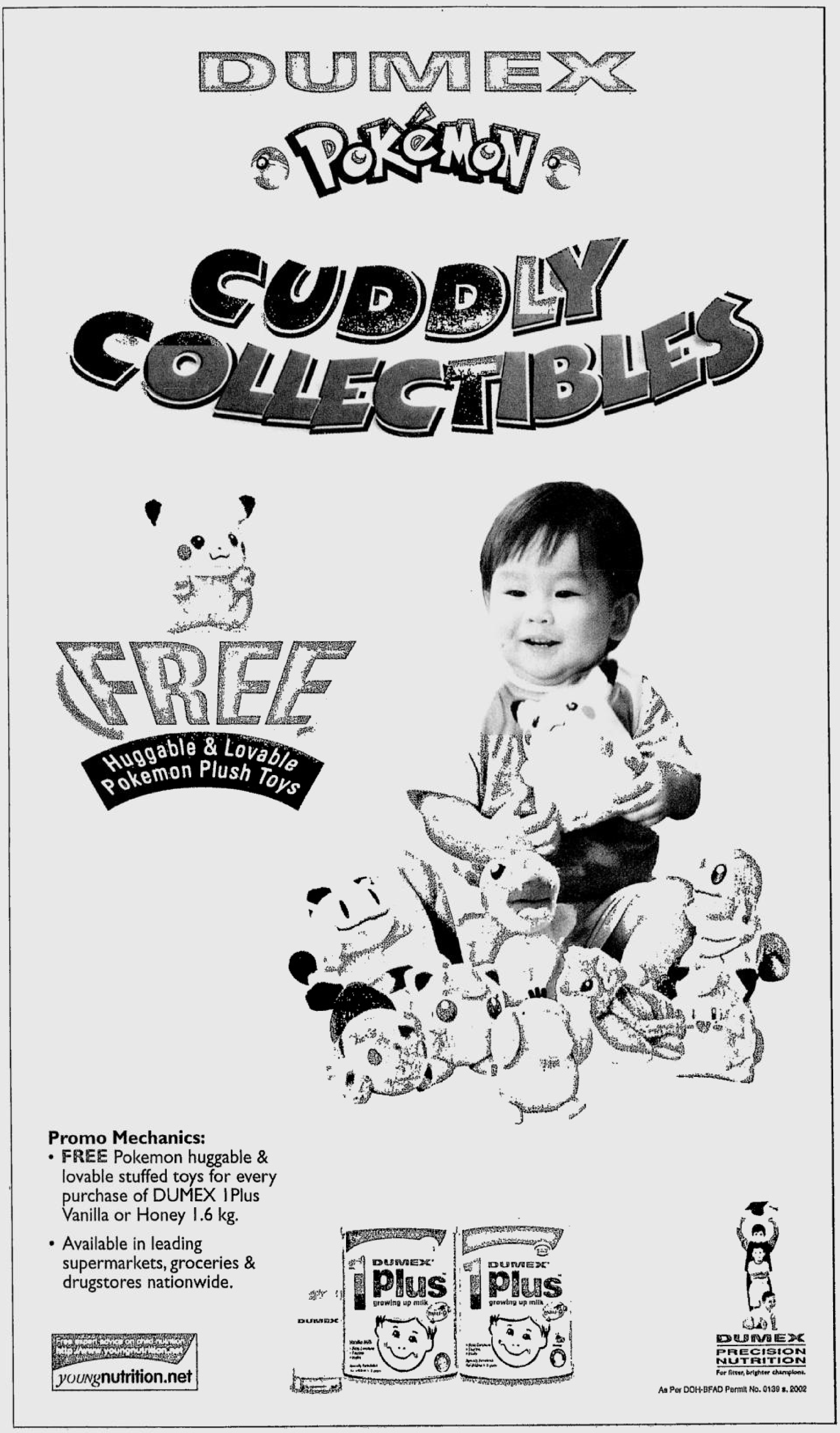
The Wacoal bra enhances the female figure. It adjusts to the female form, creating an ideal proportion and silhouette. It also supports the body for easy movement.

It likewise smoothens the flow of clothes.

Ultimately the Wacoal Air Cool bra boosts a woman's confidence and celebrates her femininity.

The Wacoal Air Cool bra is available in leading retail outlets and department stores.





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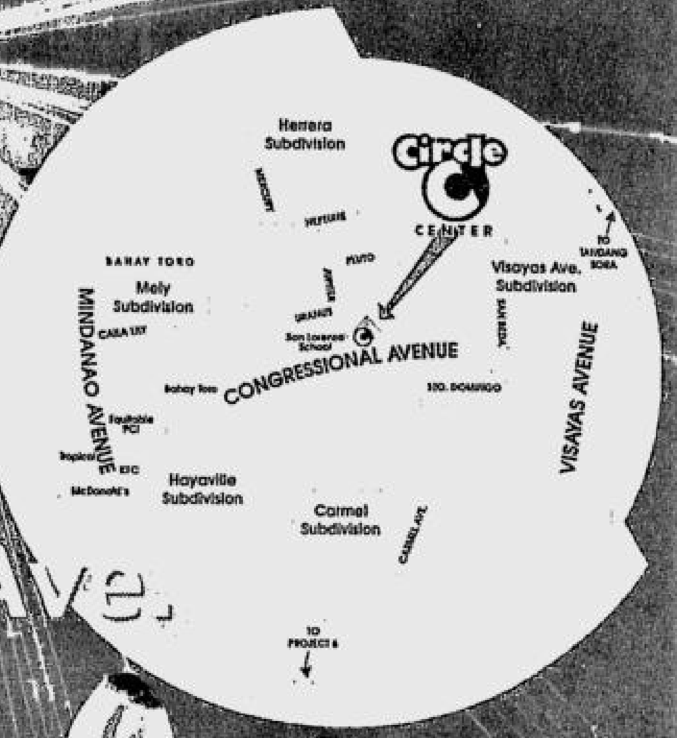
Herrera Subdivision
Circle C Center
Bahay Toro
Mely Subdivision
Casa Lily
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San Lorenzo School
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Visayas Ave. Subdivision
To Tandang Sora
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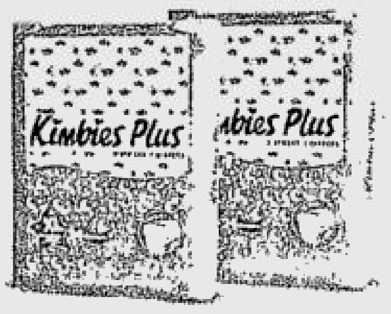
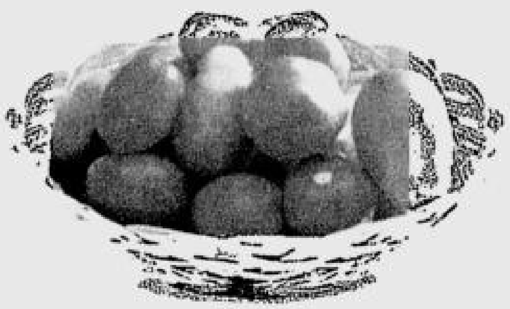


₱202.75/pack **Kimbies Plus** Disposable Diapers (XL/24's)

₱11.50 each **Milo** Ready-To-Drink 200ml

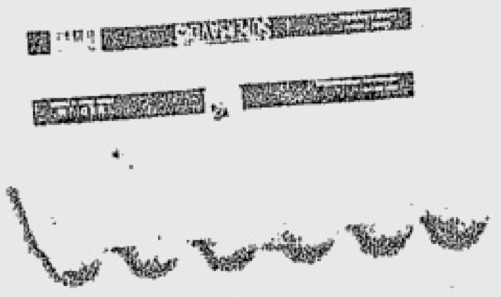
₱39.00 each **Carefree** Breathable Scented Pantyliners (20's)

Native Onion** ₱12.00/kg

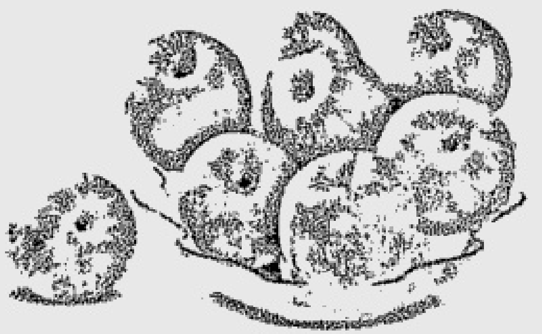


Native Tomatoes** ₱12.00/kg

₱136.50 **Purefoods Tender Juicy** Jumbo Hotdog 1kg (4.5")



Supersavers Fresh Eggs** ₱37.00/dozen



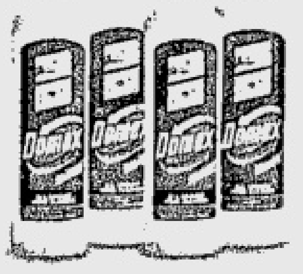
Fuji Apple ₱18.00/pc.

₱43.75/pack **Surf** Detergent Powder (Tawas) 1kg (June 1-15)

₱17.45/pack **Grahams** Honey Crackers 200g (handy pack)

₱16.75 each CDO Karne Norte 175g

₱37.75 each Johnson's Baby Powder Blossoms 200ml



₱53.00 each Domex 500ml (June 16-30)

** This promo period is applicable only for Congressional branch*

***Promo applicable from May 24 to June 15 only*

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50 years of Farrales

The dean of Philippine designers gives a sneak preview of his golden anniversary gala show

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ANTHONY LEGARDA

UP UNTIL six months ago, veteran fashion designer Ben Farrales was unsure whether to stage a new gala show or not. After all, mounting one to mark his golden anniversary in the business was no joke. Ignoring such a milestone, however, would have been unthinkable.

So what was stopping him? Farrales' creativity, after all these years, is certainly in no short supply. Although he'd be the first to deny it, money is no problem either.

The real reason? "I like to do things right, down to the last detail," says Farrales, a perfectionist who's known in fashion circles for his legendary penchant for order. "I'd been toying with the idea even before, but I felt I didn't have enough time to come up with something special."

For some reason, however, people close to the acknowledged dean of Philippine designers had been able to convince him to finally do it. It's not every day, after all, one gets to celebrate 50 long years in such a rewarding but highly competitive field. The well-loved and respected Farrales knows that loyal clients and supporters who have made him who he is today deserve nothing less.

"If I don't do it now," he reasons, "I won't be able to do it again ever."

Humble

But despite his enviable success and staying power, Farrales has surprisingly remained humble and self-effacing. "I always like to go back to things that I've done well in the last 50 years. There won't be anything earthshaking about my collection. Deconstruction is farthest from my mind."

For his invitational gala show, "Ben Farrales 50 Years," July 1 at the Makati Shangri-La's grand ballroom, he will be presenting no less than 150 clothes modeled by some of the country's top mannequins. Two special ladies in his life will host the affair: model-turned-entrepreneur Tina Maristela-Ocampo and Red Cross chair Rosa Rosal.

Farrales, of course, had discovered and trained Maristela-Ocampó, who went on to become one of the country's leading ramp models. He and Rosal became good friends because of his constant efforts to raise funds for the Red Cross. One of the show's highlights, in fact, is the launching of the Ben Farrales Foundation.

"I want to give back something to the industry," says Farrales. "One of the foundation's main objectives is to provide aspiring designers scholarships at the Philippine International School of Fashion."

The show is divided into several segments: vintage pieces, resort wear, Muslim-inspired gowns, Orientalia and Black & White. Six of his favorite bridal gowns will again be modeled in between the segments. For the finale, Farrales will unveil a collection with shades of gold. He promises to come up with an interesting mix of vintage and updated pieces that have made him famous through the years.

This includes Farrales' gown encrusted with countless buds of real orchids worn origi-

50 YEARS/ p.F4

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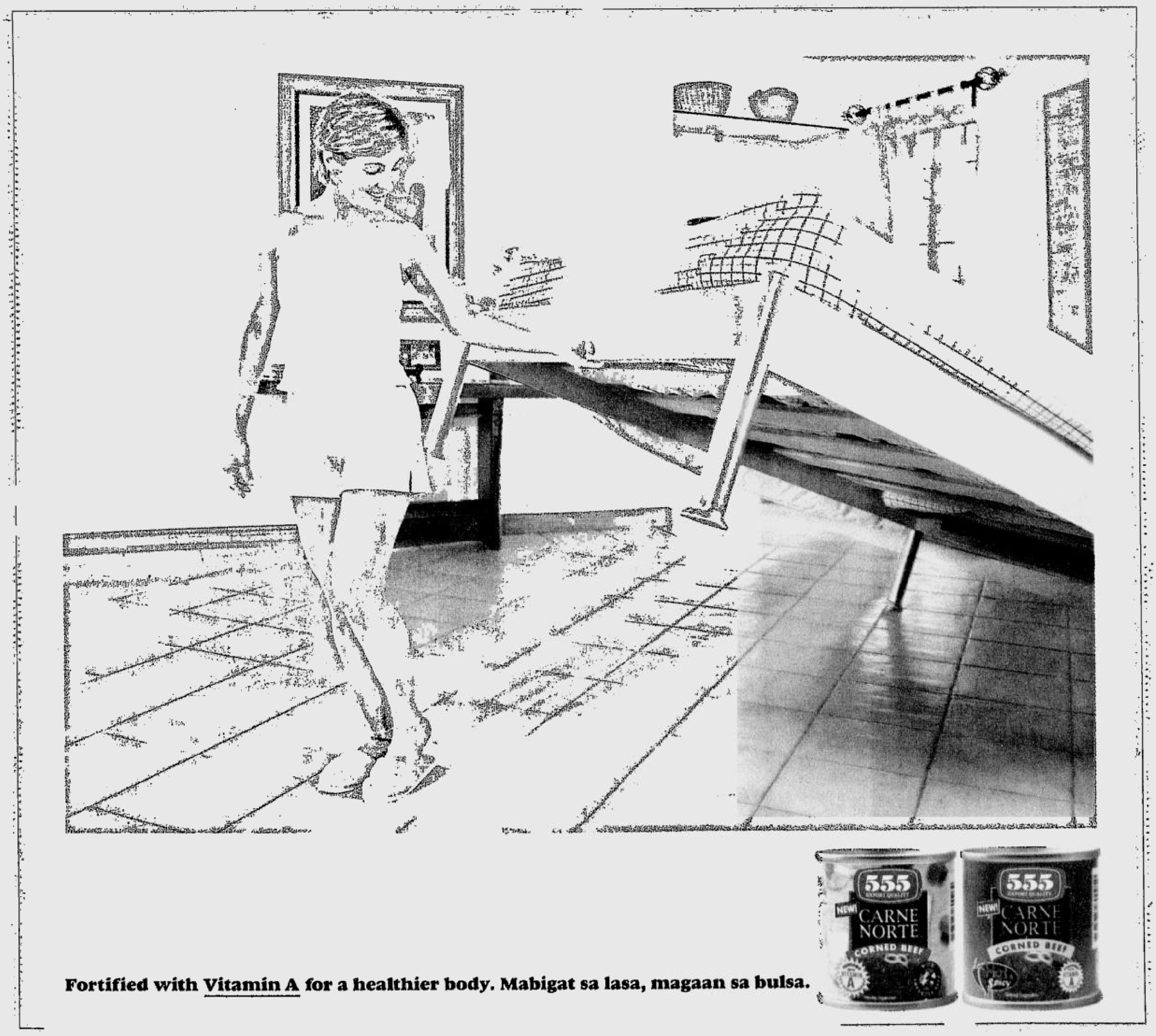
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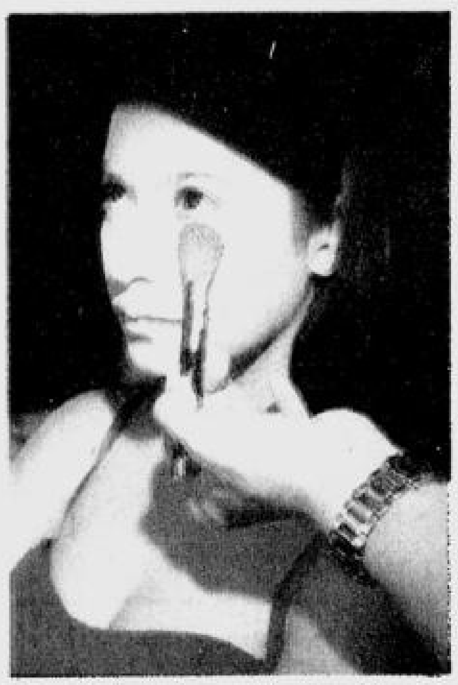
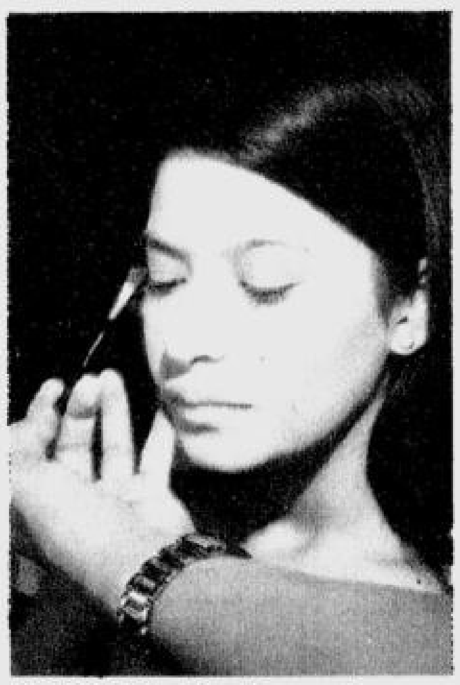
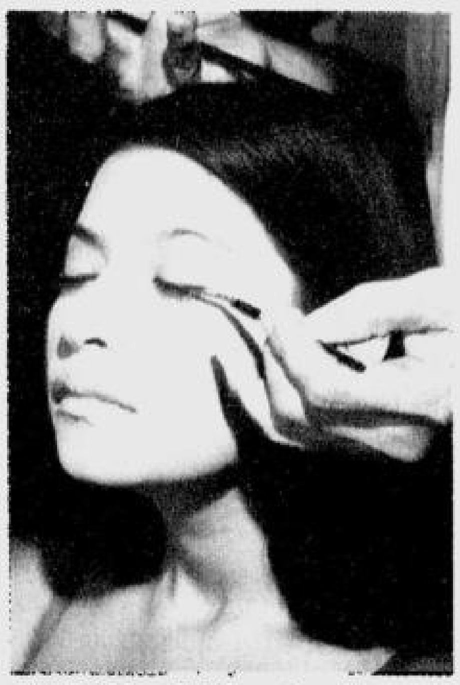
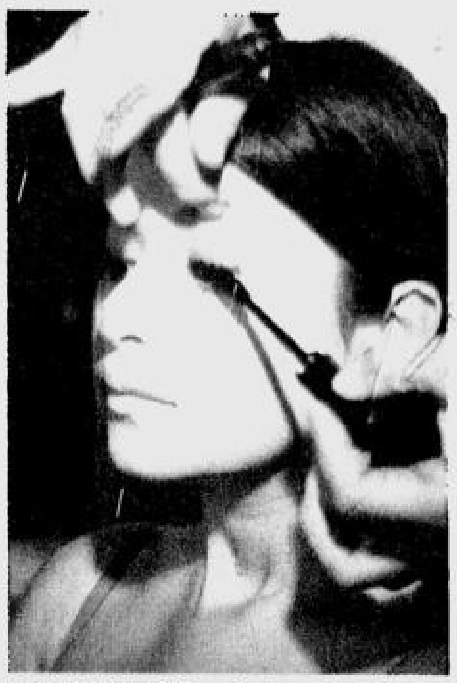
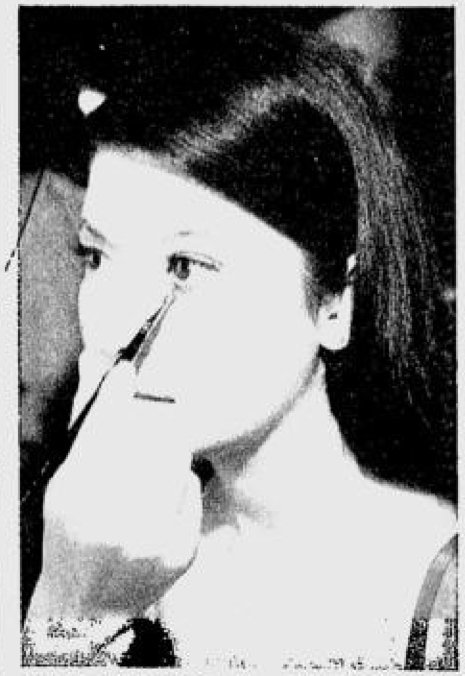

AS canvas to Assunta's olive skin, a lighter shade of foundation (Soft Beige 105) from Max Factor's 3-in-1 Complete Makeup is used, followed by Cream Puff Powder to achieve a matte finish.


THE SOFT look for the eyes is achieved by applying Max Factor's Earth Spirits Eye Shadow Pots in Fire Opal after a layer of Copper. On her crease, the Earth Stone shade of Earth Spirit Eye Shadow is used.


BY USING a slightly wet eyeliner brush, a Black Brown Cake Eyeliner is applied at the bottom of the eyes, and is blended upward.


TO LENGTHEN eyelashes, the Black shade of 2000 Calorie Mascara is used. This mascara from Max Factor fattens lashes to 200 percent.


FOR THE INNER corner of the eyes, the Barley Fields shade of Max Factor's Earth Spirits gives the eyes an extra glow.

The infinity of Assunta's lips

ASSUNTA'S PRE-MAKEUP LOOK. Her beautiful Fil-Italian features need only enhancing, hence the "translucent" look that Max Factor gives her.

Max Factor's new Lipfinity series finds haven in the luscious couplet of the Urian-winning actress

WHEN you have a face as beautiful as Assunta de Rossi's, you don't need that much makeup. Hence, when she graced the recent launch of the new Lipfinity lipstick from Max Factor, the new screen goddess was given a look of translucence, just enough makeup to enhance her incredibly elegant, Fil-Italian features.

A foundation of soft beige on her lovely olive skin became the canvas to the entire look. To enhance that skin tone even more, a brush of Mulberry Natural Blush-on Satin Blush was used. Even the eyes are soft. Her eyelids radiated with the Fire Opal Eye Shadow shade layered after a Copper Eye Shadow shade, and the Barley Fields Eye Shadow on the inner corner of the eyes gave an extra glow to Assunta. On the top of the nose, the inner corner beside the eyes, a Barley Fields shade gave an extra glow to Assunta.

Finally, Spiritual shade #180 of Max Factor's Lipfinity was used for Assunta's full-on lips. Lipfinity is the new, groundbreaking two-step lipstick system from Max Factor that splits long-lasting color and moisturizing benefits for the first time. The "paint for lips" was first applied using a Doe Foot Applicator and let dry for 60 seconds. This was followed by the moisturizing topcoat, which gave a fresh, dewy, glossy finish.

Max Factor considers Lipfinity as the most exciting development since the creation of lipstick. Providing perfect, non-budge color for an amazing eight-hour period, a single application of Max Factor Lipfinity in the morning can take you through midmorning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea—in fact, the whole day.

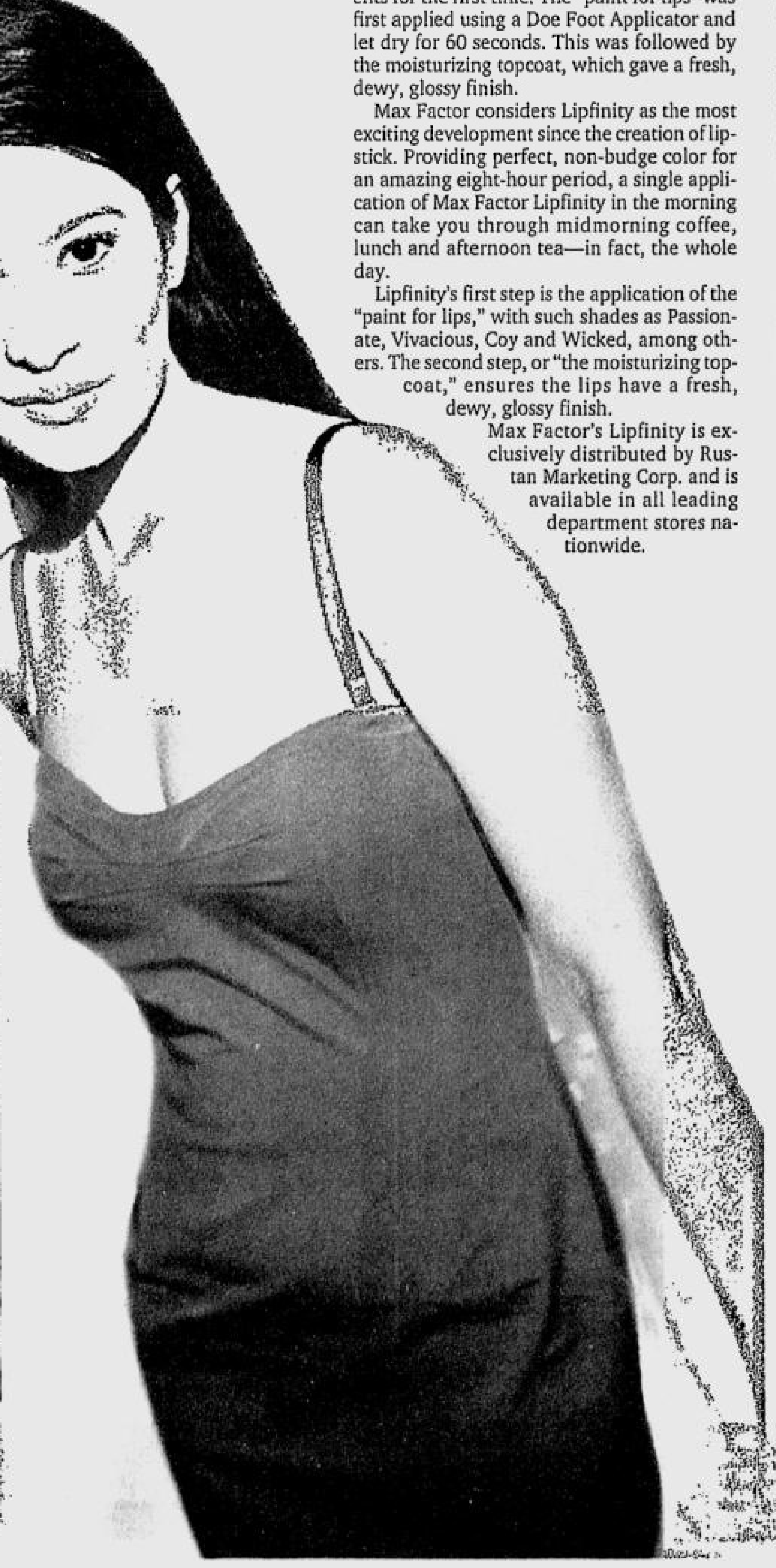
Lipfinity's first step is the application of the "paint for lips," with such shades as Passionate, Vivacious, Coy and Wicked, among others. The second step, or "the moisturizing topcoat," ensures the lips have a fresh, dewy, glossy finish.

Max Factor's Lipfinity is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp. and is available in all leading department stores nationwide.

ASSUNTA applies the Lipfinity #180 Spiritual.

FOR THAT glossy finish, Assunta applies the moisturizing second step of Lipfinity.

HER cheekbones are enhanced with Mulberry from Max Factor's Natural Blush-on Satin Blush.

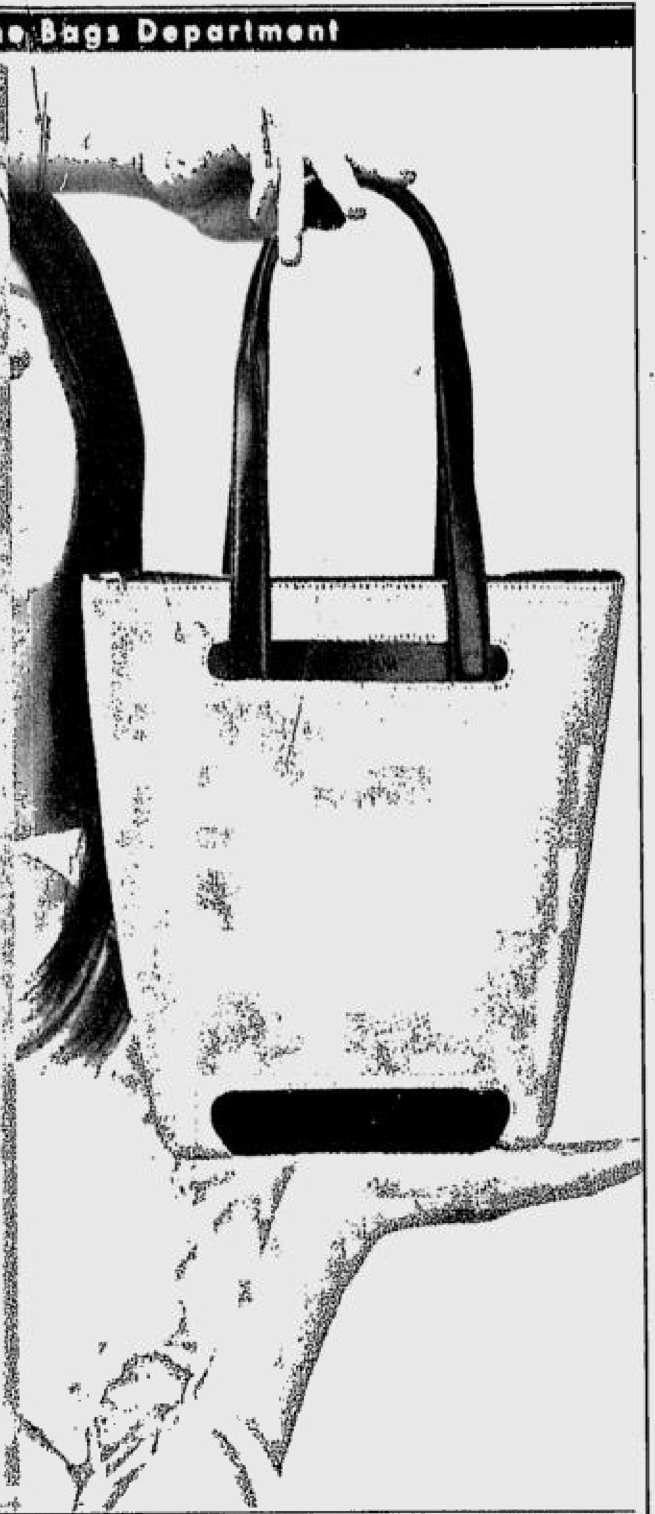


ASSUNTA and her Lipfinity look

At the Bags Department

SECOSANA

Trendy fashion essentials in faux leather



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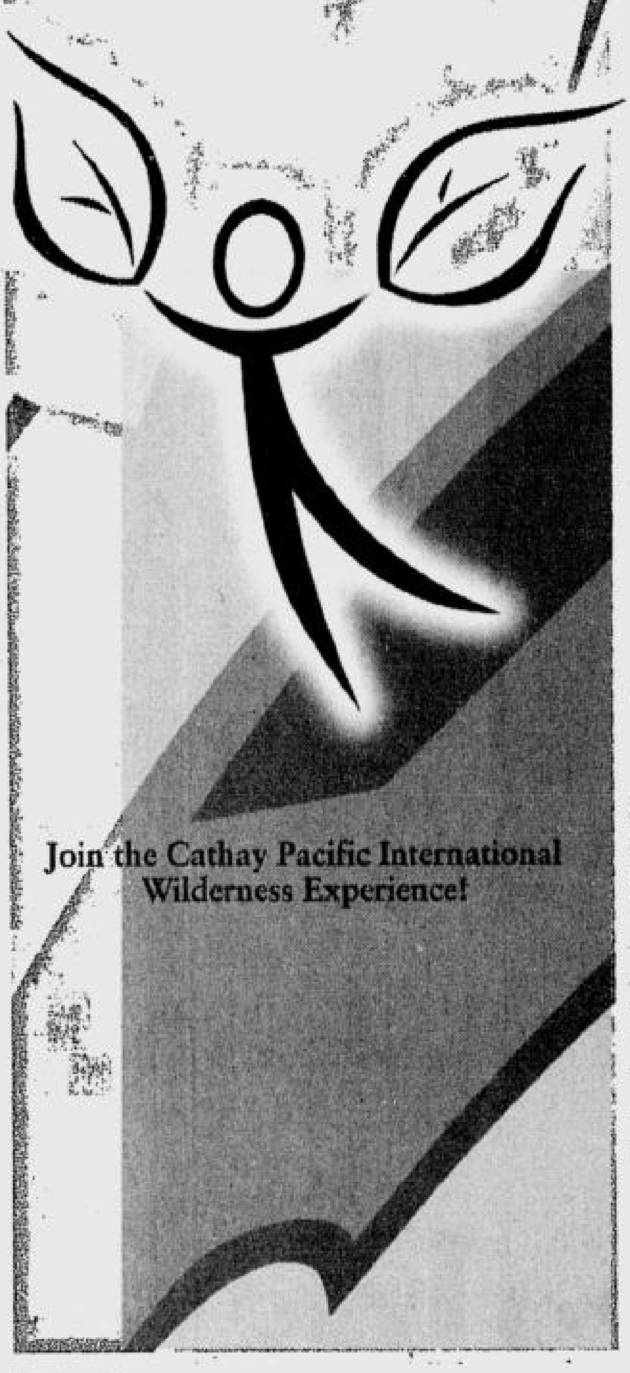

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Can't wait to join? Then write a 400-word English essay on an environmental topic that interests you, giving your personal opinion on the issue and possible solutions to the problem. Send it with the completed application form below, a detailed resumé and a copy of your valid passport on or before May 25, 2002. You could soon be on your way to the wilderness of South Africa and helping the planet! Visit our website @ www.cathaypacific.com/ph

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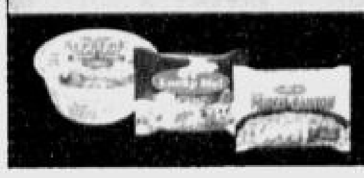
Cebu City, Philippines

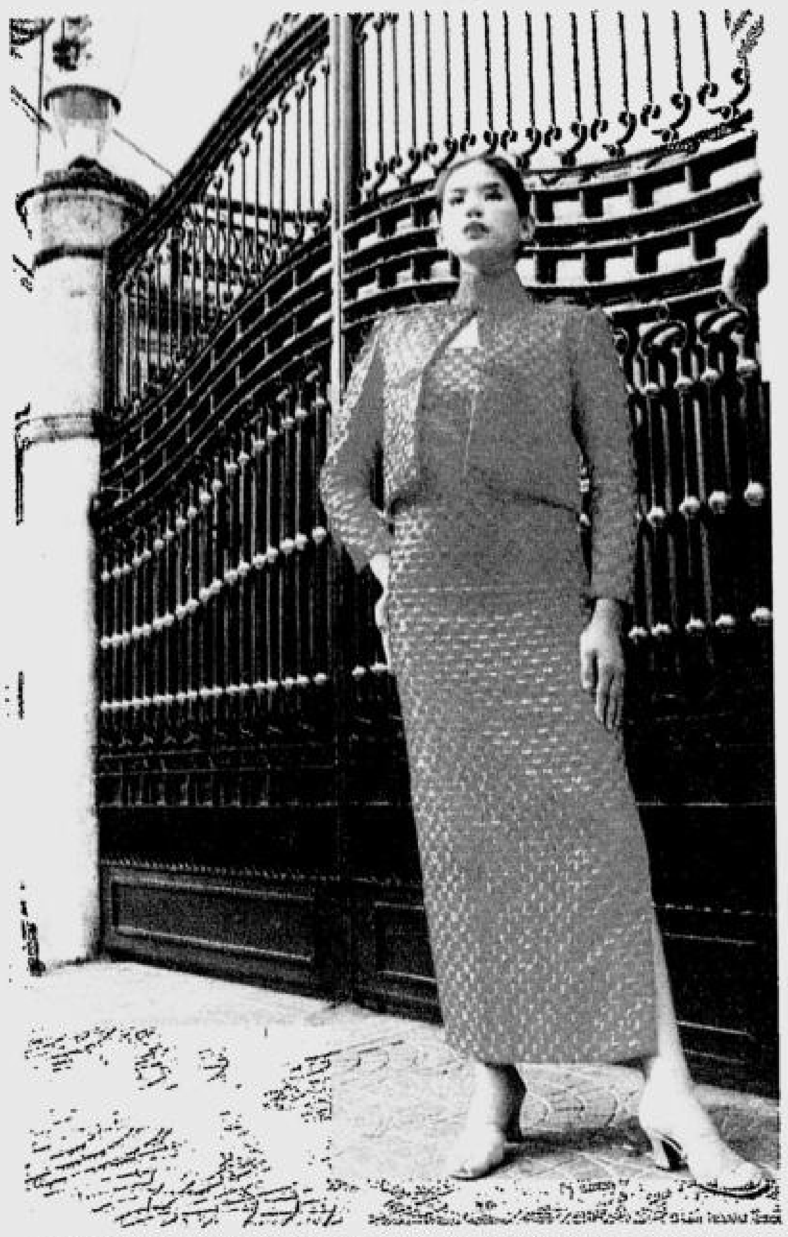


Init ng Pag-aalaga. Ibinabalik niya sa kanyang ngiti at sa kanyang yakap ang alagang ibinibigay mo. At sa tuwing dadampi ang mga labi niya sa iyong pisngi—sasabihin mo sa iyong sarili, "Ang sarap maging Daddy". Ganitong mga saglit ang inspirasyon sa bagong mukha ng Lucky Me!

Lucky Me!

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

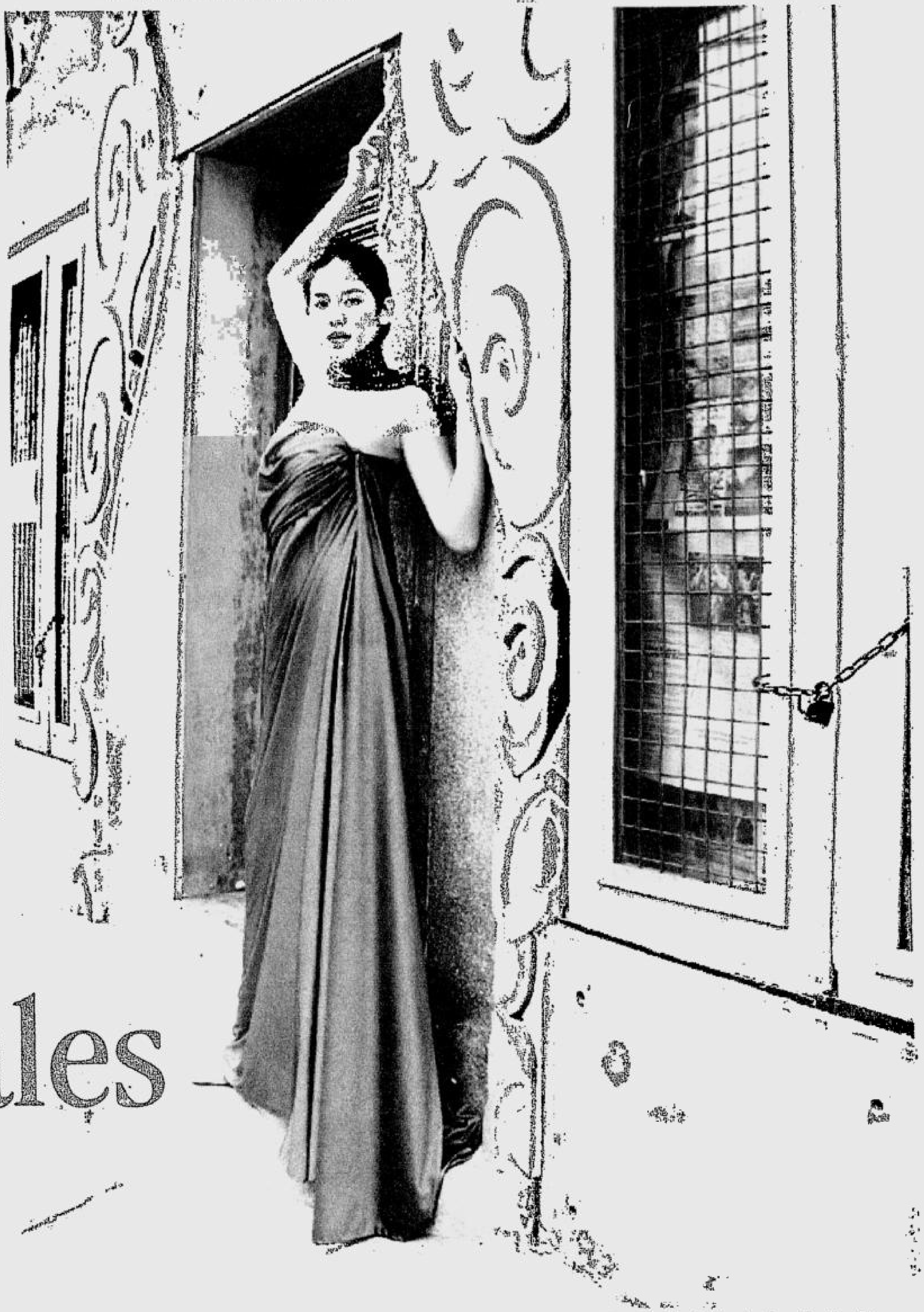
From page F1



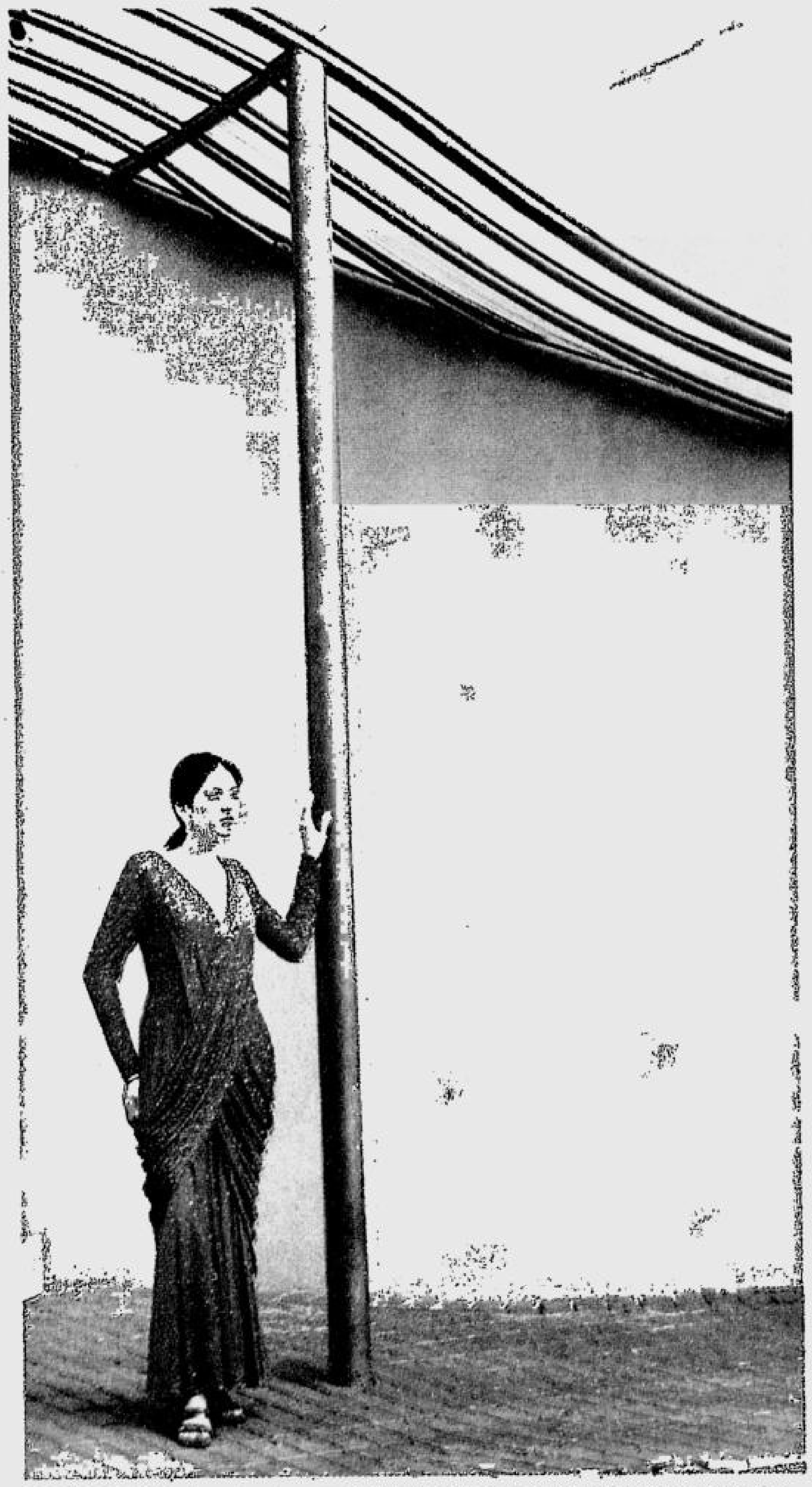
BEST OF BOTH WORLDS. Farrales blends Filipino and Chinese influences in this strapless gown with matching box jacket made from red satin ribbons woven in a *banig* pattern. The Chinese connection is reflected in the mandarin collar and frogs.

50 years of Farrales

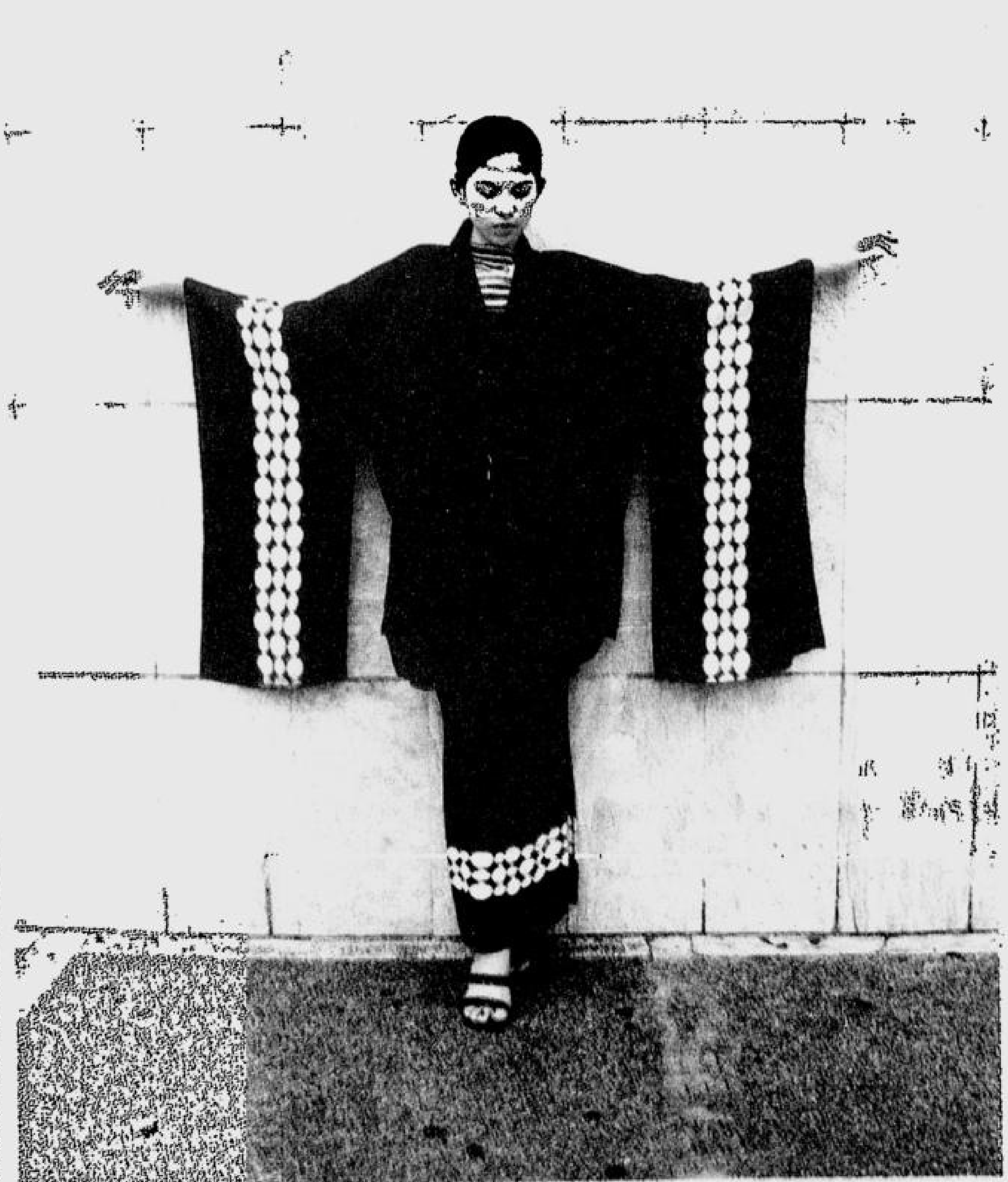
MODEL: EVITA BUNYI
LOCATION: REMEDIOS CIRCLE, MALATE



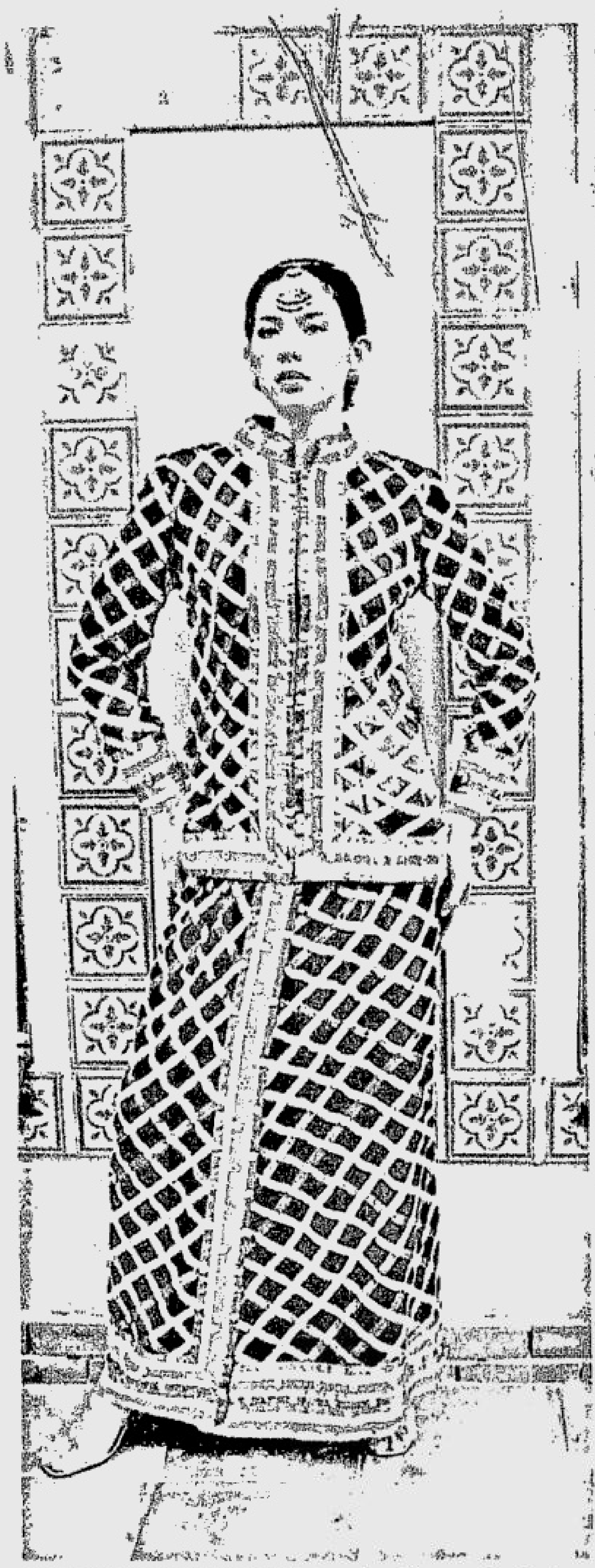
FLUIDITY. Ben Farrales loves to see how far the fabric can go. His expertise in draping is evident in this emerald green creation made of silk jersey and masterfully draped with a second layer.



ONCE AROUND. Farrales gives a new twist to his career-defining Maranao collection by using bolder colors, newer materials and more diverse beadwork. This V-necked piece is draped like a sarong and studded with hundreds of bugle beads.



TURNING JAPANESE. This three-piece Nippon-inspired number in black crepe with circular prints consists of a skirt, a tunic and a kimono. Women with full figures can still feel and look feminine underneath its loose, soft lines.



RAINBOW CONNECTION. This two-piece Maranao-inspired Nehru jacket and wraparound skirt in black is crisscrossed by satin ribbons and accented with gold studs. The trellis pattern ends where the senefa border begins.

From page F4

nally by Edith Rabat and his sleeveless *terno* with stylized *cola* that once draped Criselda Lontok. He has also recreated his trademark *terno* accented from the sleeves to the bodice and skirt with a string of tambourine.

Of course, he will be giving his career-defining Maranao collection a new spin through the use of bolder colors, new materials and more diverse beadwork. The two-piece Maranao-inspired Nehru jacket and wraparound skirt in black, for example, is crisscrossed by multicolored satin ribbons and accented by flower-shaped gold studs. The trellis pattern ends where the senefa border begins.

"I can still remember when we presented the [Maranao] collection in the United States," Farrales waxes nostalgic. "I received a standing ovation from an appreciative audience at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C."

Even basic silhouettes such as the red strapless gown with matching box jacket manage to look interesting under the designer's deft imagination. Made of satin ribbons woven in a *banig*-like pattern, the creation is a cross between Chinese and Filipino influences. He also uses the same materials, this time in turquoise and tangerine, following softer silhouettes.

Master of draping

A master in the art of draping, Farrales has also given ample attention to "making something out of nothing." Beadwork is fine as long at it serves a purpose, he says, but as a designer he's equally passionate, if not more so, about draping. Indeed, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

"I take the fabric to the limits," he says. "I love to see how *far* it can go." His penchant for fluidity is exemplified in two pieces both made of silk jersey: a Muslim-inspired violet gown draped like a sarong and studded with hundreds of bugle beads; and a strapless, beadless emerald green number masterfully draped with a second layer.

The event, which is expected to draw the crème de la crème of Manila society, will be commemorated with a book written by Abe Florendo based on the life and art of Farrales. An exhibit of quintessential Farrales gowns will also be on display at the foyer to provide guests with a preview of what awaits them in the gala show.

Farrales can now heave a sigh of relief since the collection, he says, is "75 percent" complete. Despite the hard work and attendant hassles that have gone into putting up such a grand spectacle, the father of three teenage boys appears surprisingly relaxed at his shop in Malate. And why not?

"I've been able to simultaneously attend to my numerous obligations at home and within the community. My devotion to the Sto. Niño as well as my social life have yet to suffer. The only thing which continues to bleed is my pocket book."

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

He promises to come up with an interesting mix of vintage but updated pieces that have made him famous

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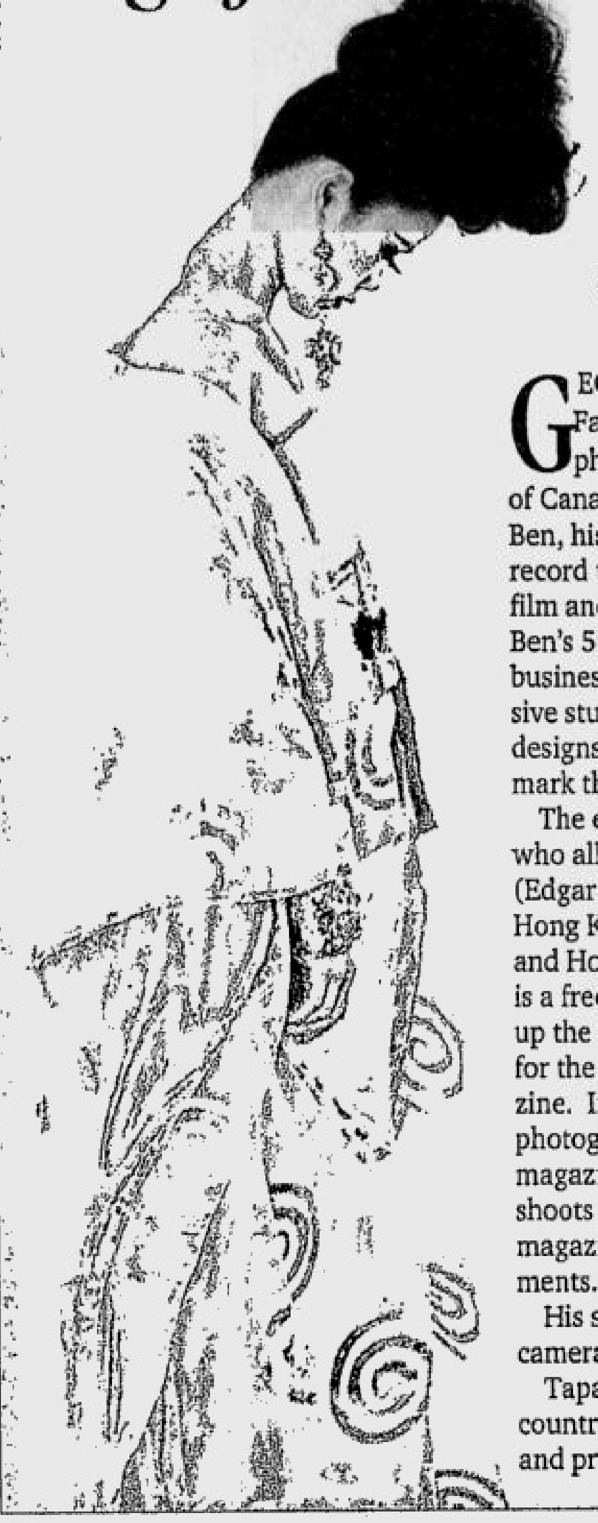
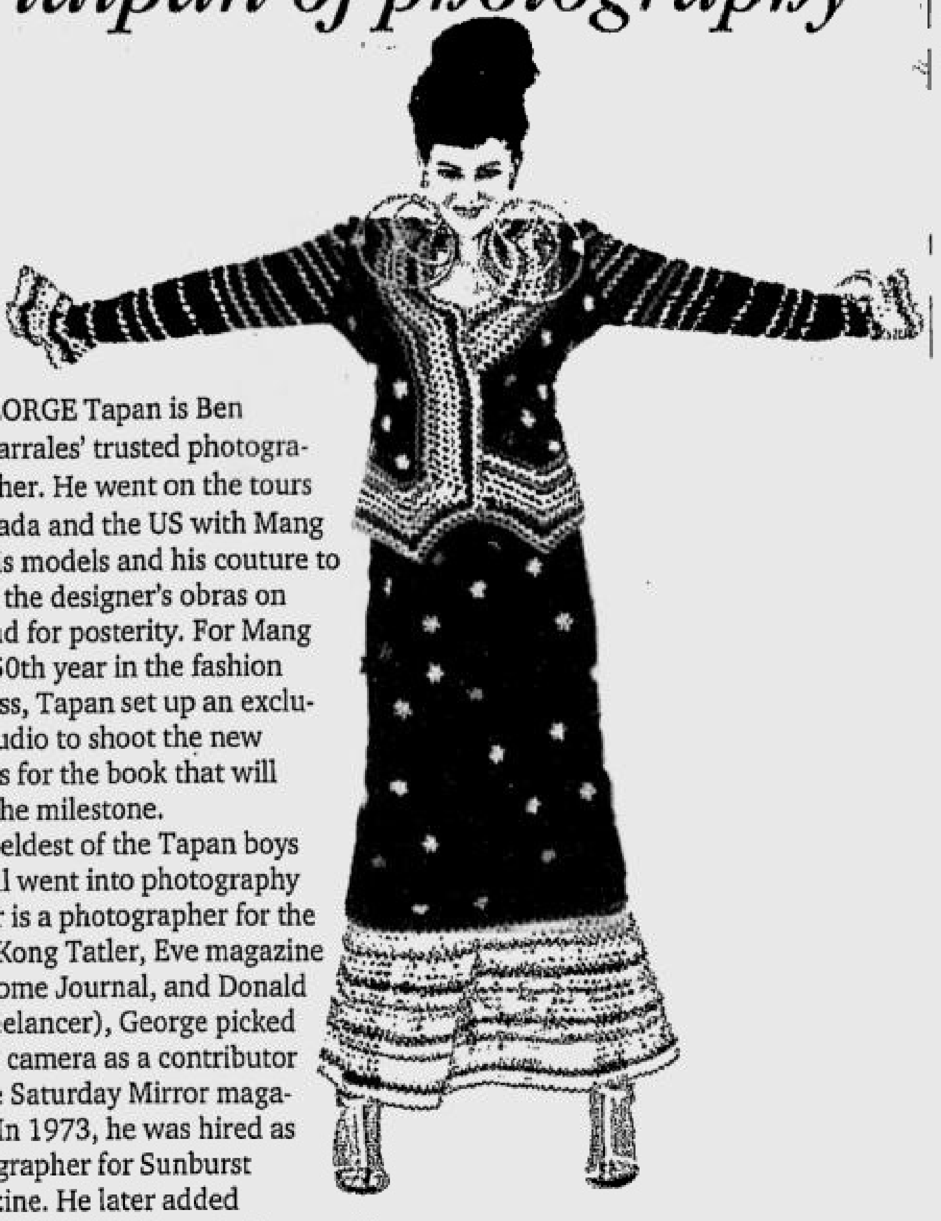
High fashion's taipan of photography



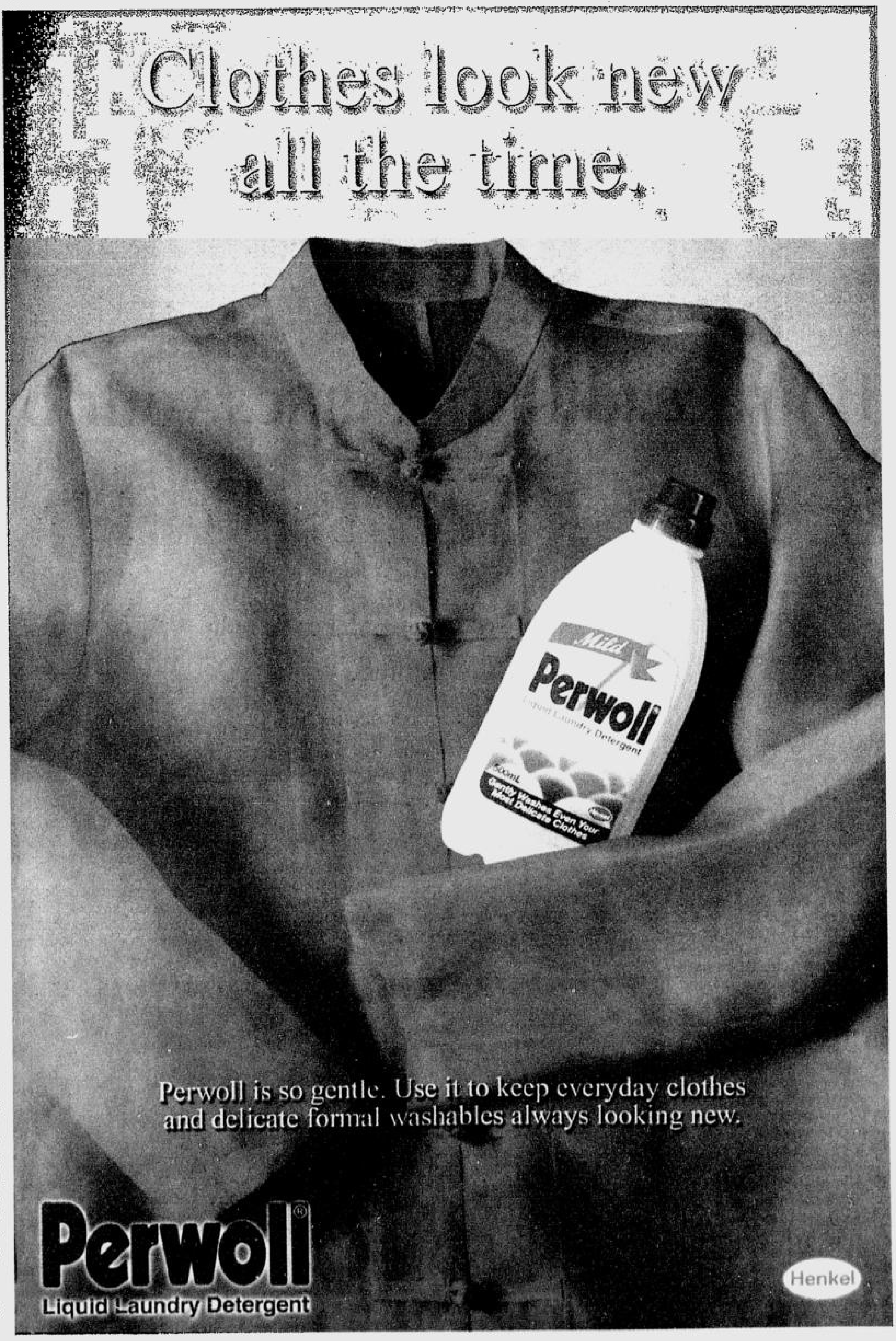


GEORGE Tapan is Ben Farrales' trusted photographer. He went on the tours of Canada and the US with Mang Ben, his models and his couture to record the designer's obras on film and for posterity. For Mang Ben's 50th year in the fashion business, Tapan set up an exclusive studio to shoot the new designs for the book that will mark the milestone.

The eldest of the Tapan boys who all went into photography (Edgar is a photographer for the Hong Kong Tatler, Eve magazine and Home Journal, and Donald is a freelancer), George picked up the camera as a contributor for the Saturday Mirror magazine. In 1973, he was hired as photographer for Sunburst magazine. He later added shoots for Mabuhay and other travel magazines to his roster of assignments.

His sons Harold and Harvey are also camera buffs.

Tapan has collaborated with the country's best writers for book projects and promotional materials, including the coffee-table books "Santo Niño" (also published by Farrales) and "Vestments." He is currently working on a book on the living lakes of Laguna and another that will show off the beauty and bounty of the land of Lanao del Norte.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RISSA Samson wears it off-shoulder with a denim corset band and floral skirt.

PRINTS and drapes for a sense of romance by F&H

TUTTI Frutti layering on model Nicolette Bell

CORPORATE attire by F&H need not be boring

WHITE plus black lace equals sexy seduction on Angel Agustin

TINT OF CHERRY. Isabel Roces exudes sweetness and charm in this F&H accessorized number.

F&H top with quirky details, and denim and fringe skirt on Valerie de los Santos

FOLDED & Hung image model Raya Mananquil in a stylized peasant off-shoulder top

Bare that shoulder!

Text by Tim Yap
Photos by Eddie Boy Escudero

BEFORE, it was the spaghetti strap. Now look around you—the off-shoulder peasant top is everywhere, from your friendly officemate to your party-crazy girl friends. Women just can't seem to get enough of it.

Blame it on the return of romanticism and the fashion world's obsession with it. From runway to reality, this is one look that transcends both platforms and succeeds in several variations.

YSL pioneered it in the '70s, but it took designer Emmanuel Ungaro with his bohemian-romantic look to bring it back.

YSL's off-shoulder peasant top has returned with a vengeance

Locally, designers Rajo Laurel and Rhett Eala have been doing the look for the made-to-order and ready-to-wear clients, but it was actually Cecille Zamora who introduced it four years back in her Fashion Watch gala featuring "Cinderella" as peasant.

It helps that stars like Sharon Cuneta and Charlene Gonzales (in a Wink during the baptism of her twins with Aga Muhlach) and supermodels like Tweetie de Leon-Gonzalez and Apples Aberin have been seen wearing them.

BEAUTY QUEENS ALL. Izza Gonzales-Agana, Gem Padilla, Miriam Quiambao in F&H, Des Verdadero-Abesamis and Sara Jane Paez-Santiago

On this page, witness the summer collection of hip brand Folded & Hung (styled by Chechel Joson and directed by Jackie Aquino), which shows us a thousand-and-one ways to play with the off-shoulder peasant.

My style spy antennae caught sight of women—movie and TV stars, models, socialites and partyphiles—sporting summer's latest sensation. It appeared in light cotton paired with a lace top, layered with a vest, accessorized with a funky necklace or belt, or worn as it was.

You can never go wrong showing off your prized shoulders. It's sexy without revealing too much. Stylish without going over the top—exactly just what women want.

S FILED. Janice de Belen with F&H boss Ronald Pineda

POLKA DOTS AND LACE. Yessie Solano and Ingrid Go

TIED UP. Love Suntay and Tiffany Cua

JAYA, in an F&H off- shouldered printed top, with Pineda

Hairbreadth that takes your breath away

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Romy Homillada

DONNING the latest duds and accessories alone just doesn't cut it anymore. If one is to be truly in, one must aim for the "total look."

That entails some attitude, the requisite look-of-the-moment threads, the right makeup and, lest one is left looking wanting, the hottest hairstyle.

Schwarzkopf Professional last week unveiled its hottest looks for the season in a show dubbed "Essential Looks 2002." The German hair-care company presented its hair and makeup trends for spring/summer as interpreted by some of the country's top hairstylists, complemented by the clothes of young designer Paolo Raymundo.

Total look

"These are the five looks popular in Europe this season," said Cora del Rosario, president of Top Style Marketing, exclusive salon supplier of the Schwarzkopf line. "We know it's not enough to have the right hairstyle and hair color, so we're also showing the right makeup and fashion to go with them. That way, one gets the total look."

Schwarzkopf, makers of the Igora hair color and OsiS hair care and styling lines, is one of the top three leaders in the industry. For this event, it tapped five of the country's award-winning hairdressers to create their faithful interpretations of the five looks, with playful names such as Geek Chic, Fallen Angel, Hippi, Boy/Girl and No Name.

Modern angel

Victor Ortega, commercial style winner at the Philippine Hairdressing Awards 2000, rendered the Fallen Angel look for the modern-day ingenue. The Emphasis Salon senior stylist cut the model's long hair into soft fringes that were extremely short on the sides.

Applying a pink-colored toner, the graduated lengths gave a soft look and provided a mystical flair for the modern angel. The style was versatile and allowed for movement.

A similar look was sported by show host VJ Clara Balaguer. Her long tresses dyed rose-pink, she was dressed in Raymundo's denim bustier, short skirt, fishnet stockings and high-heeled shoes. With only black eyeliner and red lipstick for makeup, the style was very sexy or, as Balaguer described it, "very Versace."

Androgyny

The Boy/Girl look spelled rebellious confidence. Rodger Craig Int'l. stylist Matt del Valle's take on the style was extremely asymmetric. Using the full-slice technique, he imbued the model's locks with two brown tones to achieve a style full of motion.

The original rendition had two blond shades as accent. Worn in two different ways—straight and conventional or wild and untamed—the hair was longer at the neck and finished with fringy bangs.

To pull the new hairstyles off, one needs spunk and attitude

BOY, girl—you don't need to decide. This style is androgynously hot.

In keeping with the look, the makeup was discreet with only the accentuated eyebrow line as defining point. With masculine trousers and sexy tuxedoes with ties—or Raymundo's version of man's trousers, sleeveless undershirt and suspenders—the result was androgynously chic.

'60s high

The Hippi look was a toast to the Flower Power era. Key element for this style was the long hair.

Cherry Reyes, technical and creative stylist of David's Salon, created the impression of flowing hair by applying the graduated and point-cut technique. She used the foil method to apply three different semi-permanent shades that gave the model's hair depth and texture.

Vibrant colors—citrons, yellows, violets—and bold and flamboyant clothes in plush velvet and shiny satin materials evoke the feeling of '60s high for the present-day hippie wannabe. Delicate makeup palettes—pink lips and cheekbones, pastel eye shadows—create a fitting contrast.

Sleek geek

Geek and *chic* are two words one not usually uses in the same breath. The Geek Chic look puts an end to that.

Under the masterful hands of Nelson Cruz, a Dagupan-based salon owner and stylist, a short hairstyle was given an ageless, distinctly structured appearance. The styling was very versatile; one only had to rely on impulse to achieve the desired result: one had to comb it forward to accentuate the bleached bangs or sweep it back for a classic look.

Black kohl-lined lids and a loud lip color like red or orange nearly tainted the geek with the hip. Throw in '50s-inspired fashion—dresses with small waistlines, short jackets and padded shoulders in oxford, velvet, satin and wool fabrics—and that was one sleek geek ready to go!

The outcome was reminiscent of the Western college-professor look of the '50s; thick-rimmed glasses were the clincher. Take note.

Individuality

For a style that harked back to '80s individualism, did it really need a name? Apparently not.

The No Name look brought back those large blouses and shirts over tight skirts of two decades past in the boldest of prints and colors. Leg warmers and striped pullovers became trendy again with loud makeup and strongly highlighted eyes.

Dressing up could also mean putting the tropical climate in utter disregard, as layering in near excess was cool and witty for this look. Show cohost model-actor Kenji Marquez sported the look.

Piandre Salon creative director Nikki Bacay's version of No Name's crowning glory made the irregularly cut forehead section the main appeal. With this style, hair length may vary so one can play with it to achieve the desired effect. For color, a beige shade was applied to the hair and highlighted with thin streaks of blonde.

The season's five "Essential Looks" are characteristically youthful, very evocative of one's infinite energy and creativity. But as the looks are adaptable, Del Rosario said, the more mature set who has the daring shouldn't be disheartened.

After all, what does one need to make a statement—and pull off something seemingly outlandish—but spunk and attitude? Just tremendous amounts of them.

ETHEREAL sexiness characterizes the Fallen Angel look.

HIPPI'S graduated lengths provide a modern twist to the popular '60s look.

IRREGULARLY cut bangs gives the No Name look its appeal.

Art, death and Bali

From page F8

work on his art under the patronage of his friend, **Valentine Willie**, a gallery owner. He was there with us, in Ubud, to hold a one-man show of character portraits, using Balinese models. This time he contemporized the Balinese, with a cell phone, CD player, or Nikes. (Bencab is launching his coffee-table book this year.) Bencab brought along to Bali his children **Mayumi**, a famous face in Manila, a model who's going into acting in Los Angeles; **Jasmine**, a fashion stylist in London; and **Elizar** who produces docu on World Wrestling, based also in London. Also with them is **Annie Sarthou** of Luz Gallery.

Even before we could drive around Bali, Bencab made us see it through his eyes. "The Hindu rituals are so strong," he said, "and the richer the Balinese get, the stronger the observation of these rituals, instead of getting modernized. So the Balinese don't really leave Bali."

Bencab pointed out how refined Balinese aesthetics could be, even in the most ordinary stuff. "Notice how polished even the roof thatching is."

In no time we saw it for ourselves. We drove away from Nusa Dua, where our hotel, the Grand Hyatt, is, past Kuta, which is the tourist's Bali, and on to Ubud, which is more our Bali. Ubud is the artists' haven, with its indigenous museums, artist villas. They're building villas around Ubud where you can immerse yourself with the artists and their crafts. These cozy structures respect the terrain and the natural lushness. That's where I suggested to **Daphne Oseña** to hold her honeymoon.

Even amid its humdrum modernity and signs of financial meagerness, Bali is rich in local color. Exotic would be a superficial description. For Bali is not stagnant, it is vibrant. You see creative activity past your bus window—it seems no block is bereft of craftsmaking: the famous (and expensive) Bali wooden furniture, stone sculpture, kite making, batik, paintings, metalcraft. This is what we don't project in the Philippines. Our crafts are merely surviving, but they're not viable enough to sustain or manifest themselves in one neighborhood after another, unlike in Bali or Chiang Mai in Thailand.

Religious shrines, if not temples, dot the neighborhoods. The daily life of the Balinese is filled with giving beautiful and delicious offerings to their gods; their lifestyle is built around festivals. In just one afternoon, we saw women, all dressed up, wending their way on the street balancing tiers of food offerings on their heads, on their way to the temples.

Always, there is uninhibited color and design. Shrine gods are wrapped in plaids or any fabric design imaginable. Temples have décor features that are a feast to the eye and a great load on the mind: intricate stone carvings, wood panels that are a rainbow of colors, and deity sculptures whose expressions stun.

No wonder the Balinese architecture can impose itself on the world. It is now the vogue in affluent Filipino homes, so that Filipino architects and designers make their regular pilgrimage to Bali for inspiration.

The Balinese architecture, from the temples to the homes, is a masterwork of balance and grace. The tile roofs follow a graceful slant, their fluidity balanced by the hard yet intricate metalwork that crowns them. And everywhere there is the terracotta orange brick façade. The Bali orange—I muttered this over and over until Ethel told me to shut up.

Before I left for Bali a friend asked me never to miss the sunset in Tanah Lot, a place known for its temple and as an old burial ground. I didn't make it to Tanah Lot, never saw its sunset. I wonder if its sun wore my Bali orange. One day I may find out, when I go back—not necessarily with Ethel and Jullie, I hope.

Aucoin is dead

Famous makeup artist **Kevyn Aucoin** (to **Julia Roberts, Winona Ryder**, among others), whose book sold well in Manila, is dead. He was only 40. Time reported that he died of complications from a pituitary brain tumor.

There's a seminar-workshop at the Center for Health and Creative Arts (Chacra, tel. 434-5381) whose topic caught my interest. It'll help you explore your Multiple Intelligences (MI), Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and Spiritual Intelligence (SQ). I never thought there were so many intelligences. If all the people you deal with just have intelligence—period—it'll be fine.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph

THE TEMPLE: Visual feast

Auction for charity at 6 p.m. today

THE PENINSULA Manila takes the process of buying through public bidding to another level today. A total of 50 items including gowns, flower setups, cruise line tickets, videography services and others will be auctioned off at the starting price of P50 at the Rigodon Ballroom at 6 p.m. today.

Theater personality Freddie Santos will be the master of ceremonies. Proceeds of the auction will be donated to charity.

Abloom for spring

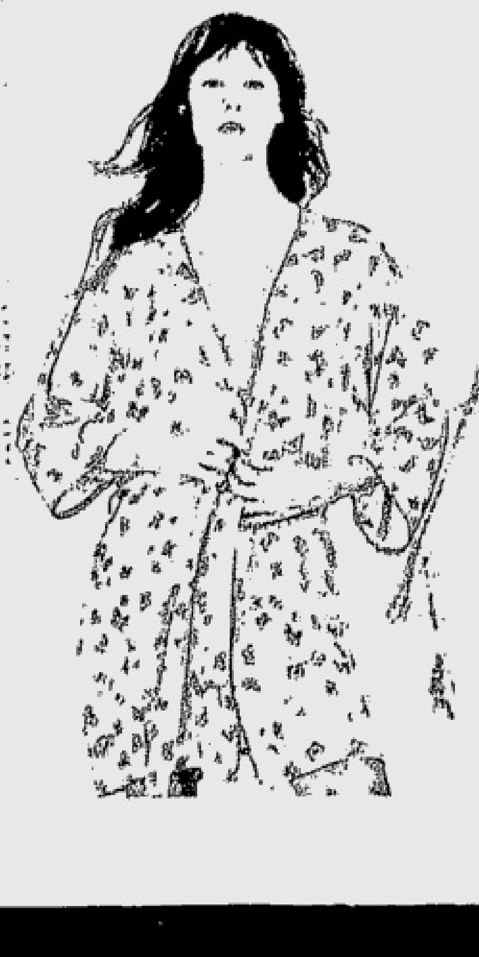
EVERYTHING'S coming up roses and poppy fields this spring of 2002 in the Natori White Label collection. The bouquet of engineered prints include large scale poppy field, bold tropical prints and feminine rose print perfect. There are also animal prints on omber background with florals for a twist, cabana stripes, and mini-checks and contrast lace.

The season's colors center on tropical hues such as turquoise, azure, red, orange and coral. Romantic colors abound as well: lilac, petal pink, orchid purple, pink blossom, blue ice, peridot, peach and jubilee. These come in cotton prints, solids and yarn dyes. Cotton lawn, poplin, sateen, interlocks, knits and jerseys complete the fabric palette, along with charmeuse, satin twills and georgette.

Natori White Label focuses on pajama dressing as inspiration for this spring's silhouette, thus the cami-pajamas, man-style notch pajamas, sleeveless pajamas, kimono pajamas and mandarin pajamas.

Selected pieces from the Natori White Label Spring/Summer collection will be featured in a fashion show at the 2002 Events at the Pen's Rigodon Ballroom on May 25.

The Natori White Label is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. and is available at Rustan's Makati and Rustan's Tower.



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Art, death and Bali

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

I LEFT Bali with orange on my mind. That color, in my eye at least, shone every where: cantaloupe orange, a mild terracotta that was in between young and old. Friends say you'll fall in love in Bali. I didn't. Not with **Ethel Timbol** and **Jullie Daza** to do the sunsets with.

My Bali wasn't a pocketbook romance; it was, rather, a slow-burning fuel for the mind and the senses. Its allure to me was its culture, its physical beauty assuming many layers the more you observed the rituals the Balinese live from day to day.

Yet days after coming home, Bali, abruptly, turned into a place I would associate, albeit partly, with passing away. Philippine Star writer **Eric Catipon**, whom we all bonded with in Bali, died barely a week after his return, fatally burdened by his heart and diabetes. It was in Bali, on our first night, that Eric celebrated his birthday. This mild-mannered and witty man, who people now say, had no mean bone in his body, and we agree, was fun to be with, a pleasant foil to our high-strung ways. I hope that in our own eccentric ways, Jullie, Ethel, **Alex Vergara** and I made Bali memorable and fun for Eric. Hardly did we feel that those days would be his last. Bali was his goodbye.

ERIC CATIPON'S LAST. The group before Grand Hyatt in Nusa Dua: from left, Jojo Terrencio, Francine Medina, Jullie Daza, Alex Vergara, Rey David, Ethel Timbol and Catipon

Our trip was more productive than hectic. The Philip Morris Asean Art Awards, highly awaited every year (it'll be biannual from hereon), was prestigious as always and this year, sprang a surprise, on the artists and audience alike, when the judges awarded the grand prize to a photographic print by Singapore's **Francis Ng Tek Yong**. By choosing photography, the judges led by Australian art scholar **Pat Hoffie** broadened the parameters of the Art Awards, redefined them, in fact, by allowing a considerable measure of technology—in this case, a Hasselblad—into artmaking.

Before this, the Awards had stayed within the confines of traditional media and innovative experimentations in mixed media. This year's decision left the door wide open for new, erstwhile untried, media transformed into art.

It is in keeping with the times—the inroads of fast-changing technology are giving birth to new art, in every imaginable form, where the craft goes beyond the bare hands of the artist or his traditional tools of paintbrushes, and into whatever resources are at his disposal. As it does all facets of living, technology is shaping art, giving it a cutting edge that no doubt is frowned upon by conventionalists and traditionalists. And it is symbolic that Singapore, that sanitized, cold, technology-driven State, became its champion in the Asean Art Awards. Francis' work was titled "Constructing Construction #1." ***(See Alex Vergara's report, PDI Lifestyle, 05/13/02)***

For eight years now, Philip Morris has been holding the Asean Art Awards, collaborating with leading art institutions of 10 countries, including the Ayala Museum represented this year by its head, **Nina Baker**. In six of those eight years, the Philippines won, if not the grand prize, an honorable mention. Last year's grand prize was the Philippines. In the past the Filipino social realists ruled the day, with their powerful visual statements against inequities and colonialism. But Philippine entries gradually became diverse through the years.

BENCAB with children, from left, Mayumi, Jasmine and Elizar, in Ubud

This year, a soft-spoken college art teacher, **Benjamin Dayrit Elayda III**, won a juror's prize, along with four others (Myanmar, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam). Benjamin's mixed media was titled "Valorized and Commodified Curio." The Philippines was represented by, apart from Benjamin, **Melvin John B. Ante**, **John Frank Sabado**, **Ronaldo Ventura**, and **Ramiro Abayen**. Their works ranged from mixed media to acrylic, their bent not social realism but philosophy.

It was obvious at the open forum how the Philippine media pressed the judges for reasons behind their deviation from the norm, the overriding question being should photography be ranked alongside paintings and traditional visual arts. As Alex's report showed, the head of the board of judges defended the decision quite assiduously. Things didn't blow up into a controversy, it was not in the nature of the assembly.

However, the decision set a precedent. The organizing art institutions of each participating country may now have to go back to the discussion table to redefine the parameters, or at least state them in specific terms, for the selection of winners who will vie in the 2004 Asean Art Awards.

My Bali wasn't a pocketbook romance; it was, rather, a slow-burning fuel for the mind and the senses

In communication, media are converging, or trying to—the old and the new. It should be interesting to see how in art awards, this convergence—of the "old" and the "new" art—could take shape.

In the Asean Art Awards, it was painless, jolting but painless nonetheless. The Philippine press wasn't really thirsting for controversy. You don't feel that mundane in Bali. Instead in Bali, you're swept by a lush nature—the trees, the rice fields and terraces, the plants and flora that would rouse the brain of a botanist and hasten the heartbeat of even the jaded visitor. It is nature that is married, with admirable compatibility, to the modern infrastructure of tourism, in its resort hotels, spas and villas. It is nature that is enhanced by an architecture that is the handiwork of the Balinese religion, Hinduism, which in the case of Bali, I learned, is the interpretation of the religious ideas of China, India and Java—a fusion that couldn't have been less than perfect, aesthetics-wise.

Bencab put it so well, "Nature and art are so integrated. A foreigner cannot supplant it (the culture and aesthetics of Bali). Instead you are the one who gets influenced. That's why Bali has inspired artists who came here through the centuries."

Bencab himself has been coming to Bali, to

ART/p.F7

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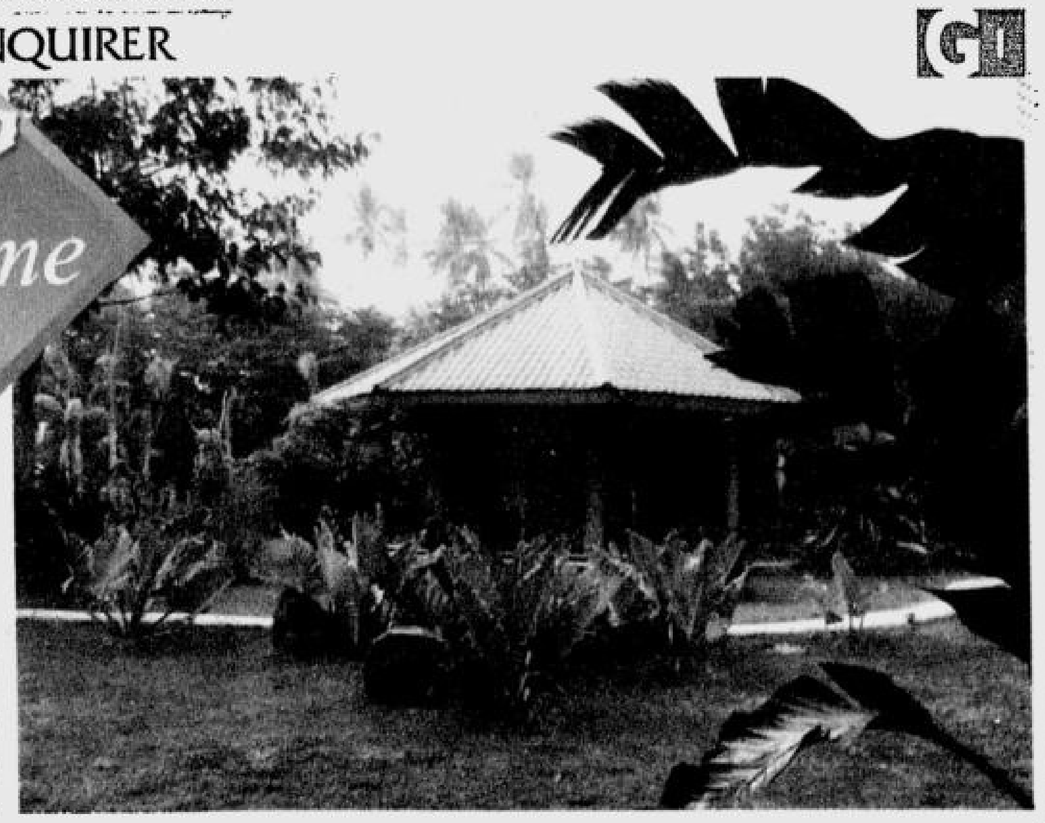
LIFESTYLE *Home*

Like a strong marriage, this house is the result of compromise

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina



CARLITO Ortega has yet to find a use for this nearly finished gazebo behind the house.

CARLITO and Minda Ortega had to compromise even before they started building their dream home in the outskirts of San Pablo, Laguna six years ago. For one, the wife wanted a house in the middle of the city to make it easier for her to attend to the family business, but her artist-husband would hear none of it.

He managed to convince Minda of the merits of living in the country by appealing to her business sense. Land prices, after all, are much cheaper the farther you are from the center of town.

"A 400 to 600-sq-m property in the city could set us back by P1 million," he says. "We could already buy a sprawling property in the country with that amount."

Remote

They finally acquired a 1.5-hectare lot in one of San Pablo's remote barangays. Carlito lost no time clearing the land, building the house and landscaping the huge garden.

The result is a two-story home inspired by plantation houses found in a typical hacienda in Negros Occidental, Tarlac or Ilocos Norte. Instead of sugar and other cash crops, however, vacant lots at the back and front of the house are planted to carabao grass and several hardy but decorative garden plants such as palms, birds of paradise and bromeliads—"*halaman ng tamad*," Carlito describes them.

"It took us two years to construct the house because of the attention I put into the details," he says. "It probably would have taken us much longer to move in if not for the Asian financial crisis. Minda painted scary scenarios that forced me to finish it in no time."

The Ortega home, with a floor area of 220 sq m,

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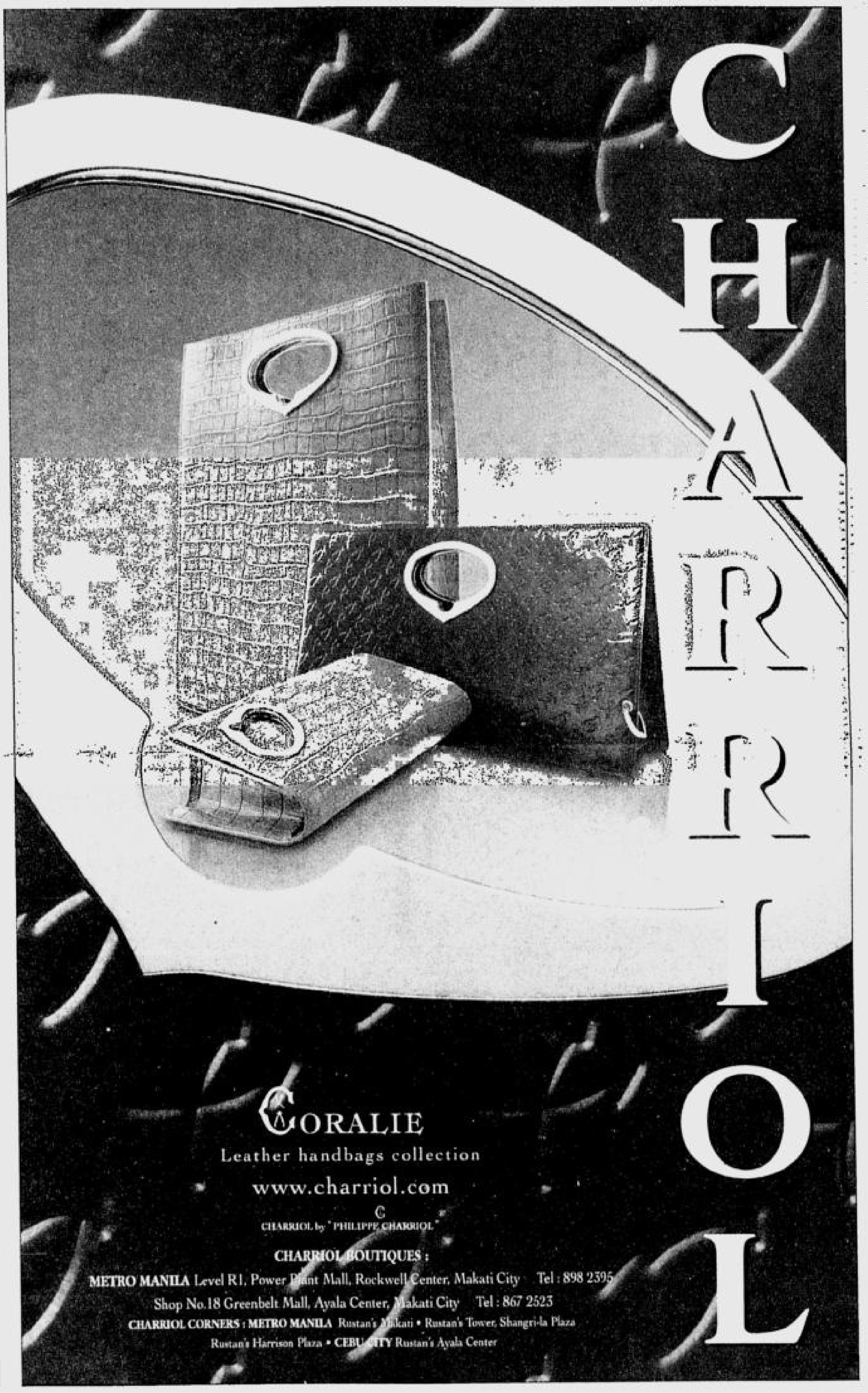

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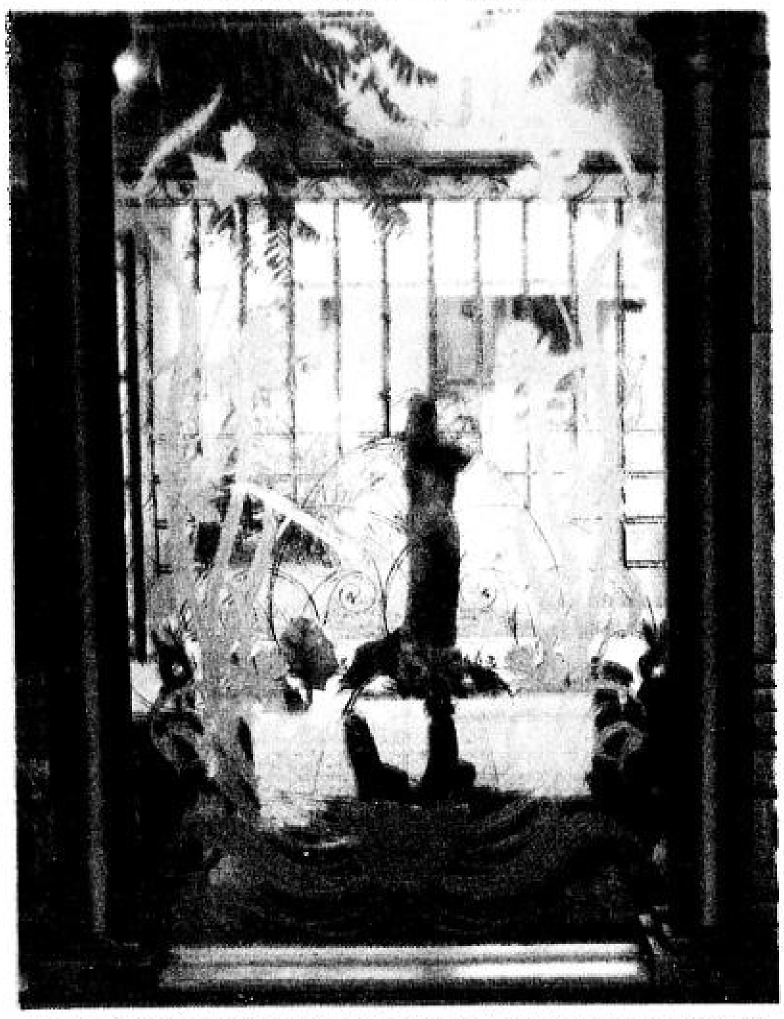
A CLOSER view of the pocket garden



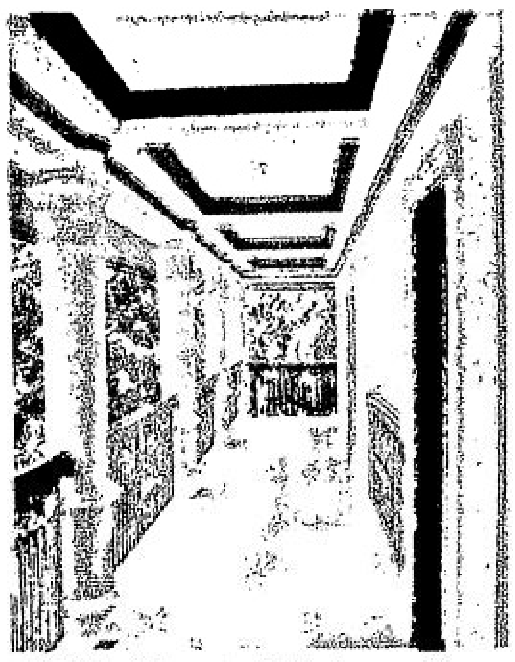
AN INDOOR pocket garden doubles as a vestibule and is set off by etched glass panel and two wooden columns.

THE HUSBAND'S love of wood and artsy combination of brass and metal is reflected in the staircase.

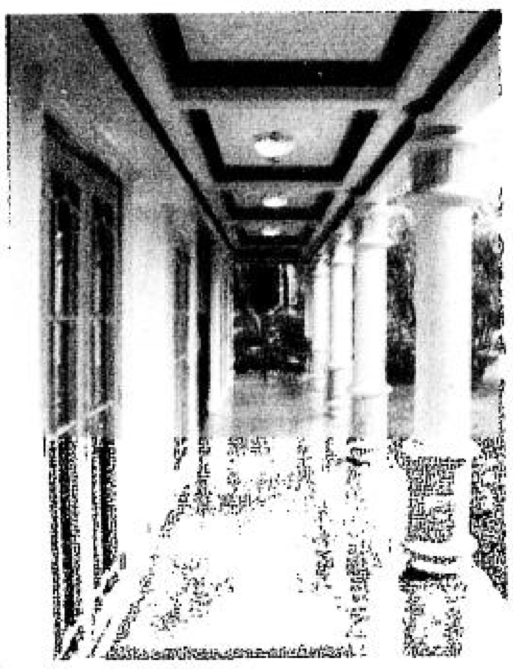
Like a strong marriage, this house is the result of compromise

From page G1

The two-story home is inspired by plantation houses found in a typical hacienda in Negros Occidental, Tarlac or Ilocos Norte



A VIEW of the extended balcony with columns accented with *araal* and a series of recessed ceiling set off by wooden cornices



THE SAME elements are found in the portico.

looks bigger than it actually is. Carlito achieved the illusion of space by having a wide façade built. Yes, an architect came in much later to fine-tune Carlito's ideas and check whether they're structurally sound or not.

In fact, every side of the house looks impressive enough to be the façade. The side facing the backyard is actually more striking than the real façade because of a series of columns on the first and second floors and a balcony.

Filipino touches

The house may be awash in Western influences, but several Filipino touches manage to stand out. Carlito, for instance, made use of *araal* or locally sourced marble to accent columns and set off the first from the second floor.

One of the its focal points is an indoor pocket garden with a marble statue that greets you the minute you enter the house. It doubles as an open-air vestibule that extends to the second floor and separates the living room from the dining area. Etched glass facing the foyer adds to the garden feel and protects against the rain.

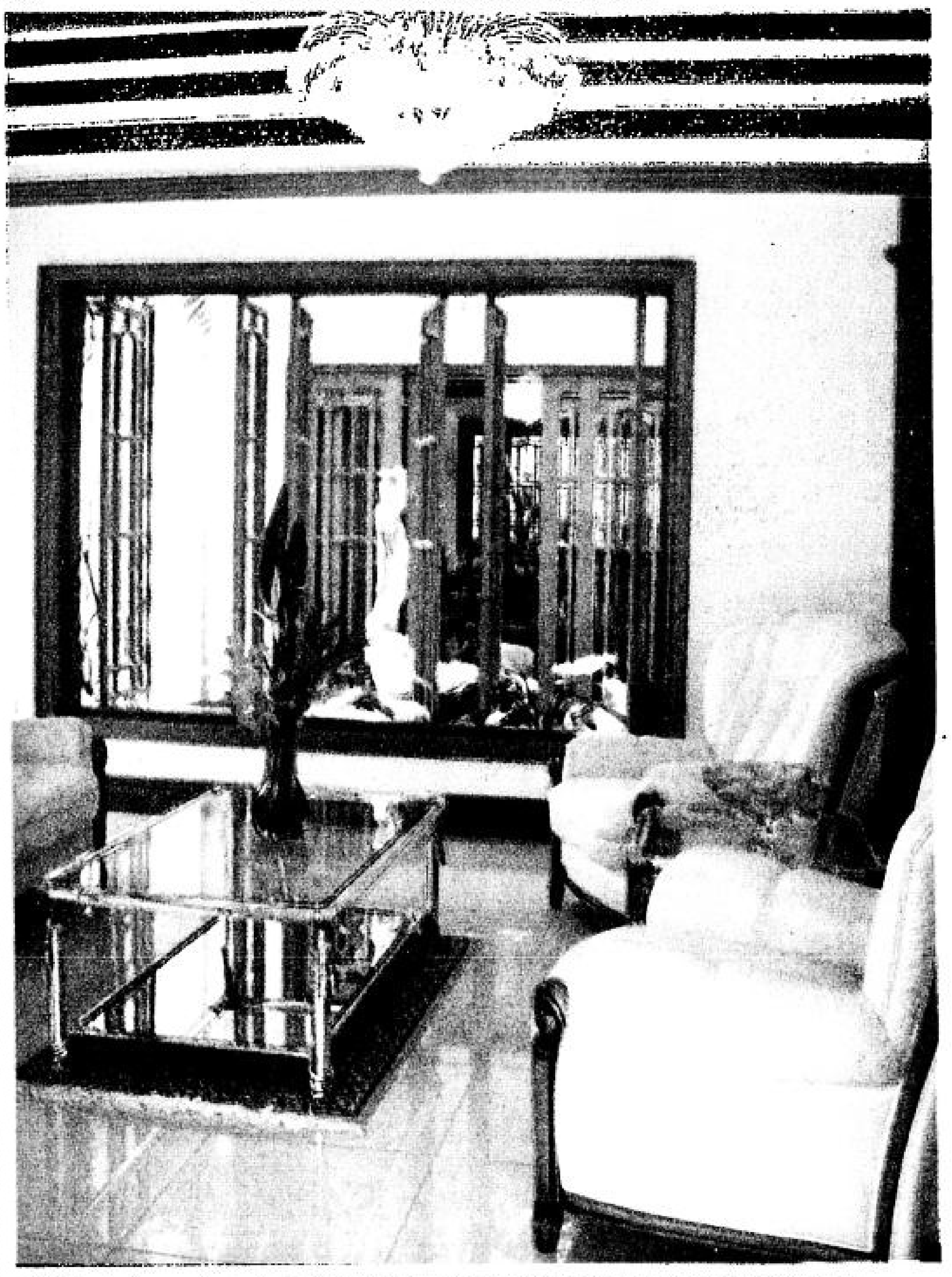
Huge windows that face each other allow air to circulate freely between the living room and dining area. In fact, several French windows that open into the garden are found in both areas. Carlito really wanted the first floor wrapped in huge glass panels from floor to ceiling, but Minda opposed the idea for fear of threats to their security—mostly imagined, says the husband. Again the two had to compromise.

French windows

"I wanted the glass panels to be my canvas and the garden to be my painting," he explains. "In the end, we had to settle for French windows."

Aside from letting air to flow freely, the French windows allow unimpeded human traffic every time the Ortegas host a party. Indeed, guests could move with ease from the garden to any part of the first floor.

Speaking of floors, Carlito wanted narra planks for the first and second levels but Minda insisted on concrete. The couple eventually found a middle ground to keep the peace.



HUGE windows allow air to flow freely between the living room and dining area.

Shiny granite tiles now cover the ground floor, while narra planks have found their way to the second floor.

"Wood looks and feels good," says Carlito, a part-time wood sculptor. "Given a choice between a mattress and a flat wooden surface, I'd choose the latter anytime." His love of wood extends to moldings, posts, jambs, baseboards and arches, which are made of narra, *kamagong* or *yakal*.

Artworks

An overhead narra kitchen cabinet has carved accents inspired by the lowly *banig*. Several narra arches display a profusion of carved leaves and curlicues. Multilevel recessed ceilings, each bordered by carved wooden cornices, are artworks in themselves.

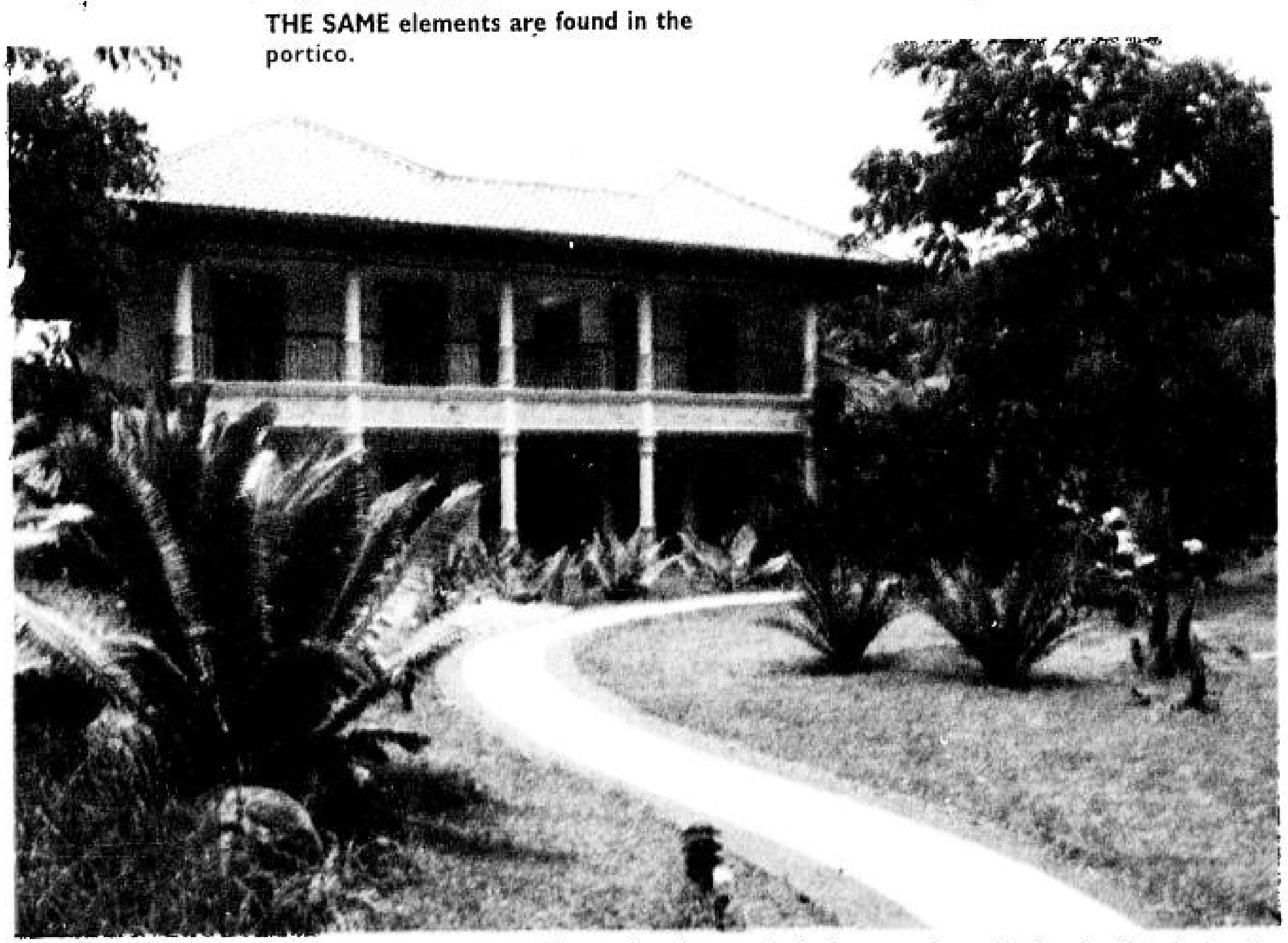
"I want our house to be one-of-a-kind," says Carlito who saw no need to hire an interior designer, "a structure that would still manage to look good even without the fancy furniture and expensive artworks."

Minda, he says, thinks differently. "If you're to spend money on a house, you might as well come up with something sturdy that you could bequeath to your children."

With their impressive house, the artist and the businesswoman have certainly found an ideal middle ground and the harmony that makes the structure truly a home.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

MULTILEVEL recessed ceiling and light diffuser by the kitchen are artworks in themselves.



JUST AN ILLUSION. The Ortega home looks bigger than it actually is because of a wide façade. The back of the house looks more imposing than the front because of a series of columns on the first and second floors and a balcony.

HARDY plants and the remains of a cart give the sprawling garden a rustic feel.

Gardening guru has nurtured more than just plants

From page G4

gardening column in newspapers and magazines.

The garden people attended the milestone event in the life of their guru. Many of the guests, including this writer, were fellow gardeners and grateful students whose lives Metilla had touched one way or the other. Not a few people were taught or inspired by Metilla and his plant arts to pursue gardening as a hobby, therapy and source of livelihood. His flower arrangements and pots of beautiful plants have colored memorable events in the lives of friends like birthdays, the funeral of a loved one, weddings, etc.

Metts, as friends call him, described his first one-man exhibit as "my golden wedding anniversary, a life-long dream come true." Since he quit his job as a public school teacher 40 years ago, he has devoted his celibate life to his own garden or tending other people's gardens, learning a wide gamut of plant arts and craft. He sells potted ornamentals and dish gardens to earn a living, provides landscaping services, and conducts plant arts workshops.

GUESTS OF HONOR. Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando and Felisa Chiongbian with Metilla

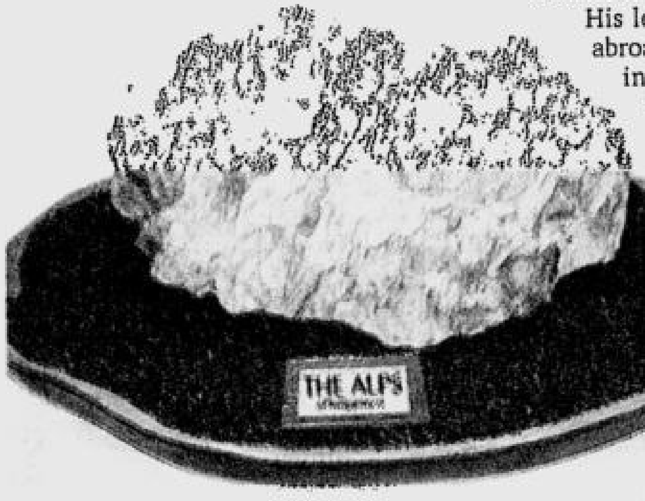
Not just plants

But plants are not the only things Metilla has nurtured over the years. When he bought his first home—a unit in a tenement house in Quezon City—he began adopting kids of needy relatives and neighbors from Davao. He sent many of them to school. Others lived in his house as they looked for jobs in the city. In return, they helped him in his thriving plant business.

"I didn't want them to experience the hardship of my life as a student" as he recalled school life in Camotes Island where he would walk to school, barefoot and often hungry. He worked his way through college in Manila by serving as janitor, busboy and waiter at a restaurant in Quezon City.

His loyal wards, many of them living abroad, repay their debt of gratitude by inviting their benefactor to their homes, all travel expenses paid for. A niece, who married a banker, sponsored trips to Switzerland. Another relative has invited him several times to Germany. More recently, he visited a sister in Australia.

Fate, so to speak, has been kind to Metts. He now owns a property in Quezon City, a secondhand service car and secondhand delivery van. He can now afford to pay his own way to attend garden shows and visit gardens abroad. He has headed several garden clubs, and is invited by government and nongovernment organizations to give lectures and seminars on plant arts.



BEAUTIFUL Philippine stone in Suiseki art

Metilla has traveled extensively, even giving bonsai lectures to rich hobbyists in Italy and Japan. Flustered by his experiences, he confessed, "Never in my life did I ever imagine that one day, Italians and Japanese would listen to me and later bow their heads to me in greeting."

Singlehanded

Metts recounted the dramas of his life at the opening ceremony of his exhibit. It was a one-man show to the letter. Single-handedly, he arranged the exhibit at the mall, wrote and delivered the press releases, got his own sponsors, printed and sent all 300 invitations, and was the director and main host at the opening ceremony of his show.

Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando and garden matriarch Felisa Chiongbian of Cebu formally opened the show.

Fellow bonsai and Ikebana aficionados were present—Rose Avancena, Charito Planas, Julie Villareal, Mizzy Ignacio, Liling Nuguid, Dory Bernabe and many more. Garden people from Cebu flew to Manila for the occasion—bonsai aficionado Dr. Ado Macaraya, Prof. Tito Rimando, Dr. Corazon Azucena. Horticulturists from the University of the Philippines Los Baños were also present. There were also friends from the media—Llita Logarta, Linda Bolido, Norma Japitana and Lina Monroy.

"How could one man create so many varied plant art pieces for one occasion?" asked a guest. There were bonsai trees, natural stone art, Ikebana, dish and terrarium gardens, windowscape, portable garden ponds, cacti and succulents, and mini waterfalls. Everything was obviously not just a work of art but love as well. Although Metts' memorable one-man exhibit is over, interested folks can visit his garden in Novaliches, QC to see samples of his plant art work.

Call Metts at 939-4593

METILLA uses palm bracts as accents in ikebana.

Learn the ancient art of dwarfing trees

BONSAI, or the art of dwarfing trees, was learned by the ancient Japanese from Chinese monks in Buddhist's temples. Willi Hahn, Philippine Bonsai Society (PBS) president, said although the Chinese might have invented bonsai, the Japanese developed and perfected the art.

The ancient Japanese readily appreciated and loved the art of bonsai. Originally, they used nature-dwarfed trees, which were formed into unusual, even fantastic shapes but as enthusiasm grew and spread, artificially dwarfed trees had to be made by sophisticated Japanese horticulturists to meet the demand.

The art was introduced in the western world through a garden exhibit in London, England. From then on, the interest in bonsai spread worldwide.

The PBS holds annual exhibits to encourage people to practice the Japanese art of dwarfing trees. It also conducts lectures and demonstrations, workshops, field trips, bonsai hunting.

Recently, the society, together with Shangri-La Plaza Mall and the Japan Foundation Inc., sponsored an exhibit at the mall's Grand Atrium. The society will hold a hands-on seminar workshop for new members and beginners 2-5 p.m. May 25 at the Horseshoe Village in Quezon City. Romy Dino will talk about "Using Batigue Species in Bonsai-making." Call 807-4514.

Exhibit showcases Filipino version of bonsai

BONIFACIO Art Foundation Inc. (Bafi) opens to the public "Bansoy sa Boni," exhibitions and workshops on miniaturized trees, on May 25, at the Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.

Bansoy, a contraction of the phrase *bansot na halamang makahoy*, is the art of miniaturizing trees in the Philippine context. The word was coined by sculptor Jerusalino V. Araos.

Miniaturized trees originally came from China where they were called *pen-jing*. When the Japanese adopted the art, they developed a style that reflected their culture and environment and gave it a Japanese name—bonsai.

Although miniaturizing trees has now become popular in the Philippines, most practitioners follow the design principles of the Japanese. The *bansoy* espouses an indigenous philosophy of design that reflects the Filipino nature, culture, and tradition.

"Bansoy sa Boni' shows the specimens of Araos and his children—Jemil, Liwa, Mira, and Julian. It showcases their innovations in design and technique.

Activities lined up in connection with the exhibit are: "Bansoy Pinoy: An Exhibition of Miniaturized Trees" by Jerusalino V. Araos and Jemil, Lima, Mire and Julian Araos, May 25, Bonifacio Stopover; "Pasnim: An Exhibition of Sculptured Pots and Plants" by Liwa Araos, May 25, Building A; "Workshops on Miniaturizing Trees," 8:30-12 a.m., May 25, and 1-4:30 p.m., and May 31, Building A.

"Bansoy Sa Boni" will run until June 30. The show is presented by Bsfi with The Crucible Gallery, University of the Philippines College of Arts and Letters, Gardenia Bakeries Phils. Inc. and Kiss the Cook Gourmet Catering Services.

Sale aims to encourage tree planting

THE MANILA Seedling Bank Foundation (MSBF), the biggest garden center and plants nursery in the country, will have a "Bagsak Presyo" sale May 28 to June 30 to encourage people to plant more trees to help ease the adverse effects of forest destruction.

The MSBF will reduce its prices by as much as 65 percent on some items. All seedlings will be on sale.

Garden center members like King Louis Flowers & Plants, Greenworld Orchids, Purificacion Orchids, Lambana Tropical Garden, Greenhouse No. 3 Tiangge, Bulacan Garden, Green 2000, Genesis Garden and many others will also hold their own sales.

MSBF is open Mondays to Sundays. Call 929-9312 or 924-7001 to -02.

PRICE LIST

		ORIGINAL SELLING PRICE	NOW DISCOUNTED PRICE	DISCOUNT %
I FRUIT TREES				
A) Seedlings (1-2 ft)				
1. Guapple	6 x 8	P12	P5	58.33
2. Guyabano	"	15	7	53.33
3. Langka	"	15	7	53.33
4. Carabao Mango	"	15	7	53.33
5. Kasoy	"	15	7	53.33
6. Santol	"	15	5	66.67
7. Atis	"	15	5	66.67
B) Saplings (3-6 ft)				
1. Guapple	14 x 16	P45	P20	55.55
2. Guyabano	"	65	30	53.85
3. Langka	"	65	30	53.85
4. C. Mango	"	65	30	53.85
5. Atis	"	65	30	53.85
6. Kasoy	"	65	30	53.85
II FOREST/ORNAMENTAL TREES				
A) Seedlings (1-2 ft)				
1. Acacia Auri	6 x 8	P15	P 5	66.67
2. Acacia Mangium	"	15	5	66.67
3. Bagras	"	30	15	50
4. Mahogany	"	15	7	53.33
5. Narra	"	15	7	53.33
6. Teak	"	30	15	50
7. Molave	"	30	15	50
8. Talisay	"	30	15	50
9. Palawan Cherry	"	40	20	50
10. Golden Shower	"	30	15	50
11. Neem Tree	"	25	10	60
12. Acacia Rain Tree	"	15	7	53.33
13. Gmelina	"	15	7	53.33
14. Achuete	"	25	15	40
B) Saplings (3-6 ft)				
1. Neem Tree (Phil.)	Medium	P56	P40	38.46
2. Gmelina	14 x 16	110	50	54.54
3. Bagras	"	150	80	46.67
4. Acacia Auri	"	110	50	54.54
5. Acacia Mangium	"	110	70	36.36
6. Acacia Rain Tree	"	110	70	36.36
7. Narra	"	110	70	36.36
8. Mahogany	"	110	50	54.55
9. Teak	"	150	80	46.67
10. Banaba	"	150	80	46.67
11. Talisay	"	150	80	46.67
12. Neem Tree (Aus.)	"	150	50	66.67
13. Golden Shower	"	150	80	46.67
III. ASEXUALLY PROPAGATED SEEDLINGS				
A) Medium (1-3 ft)				
1. Apple Mango		P55	P45	8.18
2. Carabao Mango		55	45	18.18
3. Calamansi		70	50	28.57
4. Kamias		65	45	30.77
5. Poncan		165	120	27.27
6. Thailand Durian		275	220	20
7. Indian Mango		55	45	18.18
B) XL (2-4 ft)				
1. Seedless Atis		P90	P70	22.22
2. Avocado		100	70	30
3. Balimbing		100	70	30
4. Dayap		100	70	30
5. Giant Duhat		100	70	30
6. Macopa		100	70	30
7. Davao Pomelo		100	70	30
8. Bangkok Santol		100	70	30
9. Sweet Tamarind		100	70	30
10. Chico Pineras		120	80	33.33
11. Chico Ponderosa		120	80	33.33
12. American Lemon		20	80	33.33
13. Piranta Orange		130	100	23.08
14. Carabao Mango		200	150	25
15. Rambutan		120	80	33.33
C) XXL (4-8 ft)				
1. Apple Mango		500	P400	20
2. Carabao Mango		500	400	20
3. Indian Mango		500	400	20
4. Chico Pineras		500	400	20
5. Chico Ponderosa		500	400	20
6. Bangkok Santol		500	400	20
7. Davao Pomelo		500	400	20
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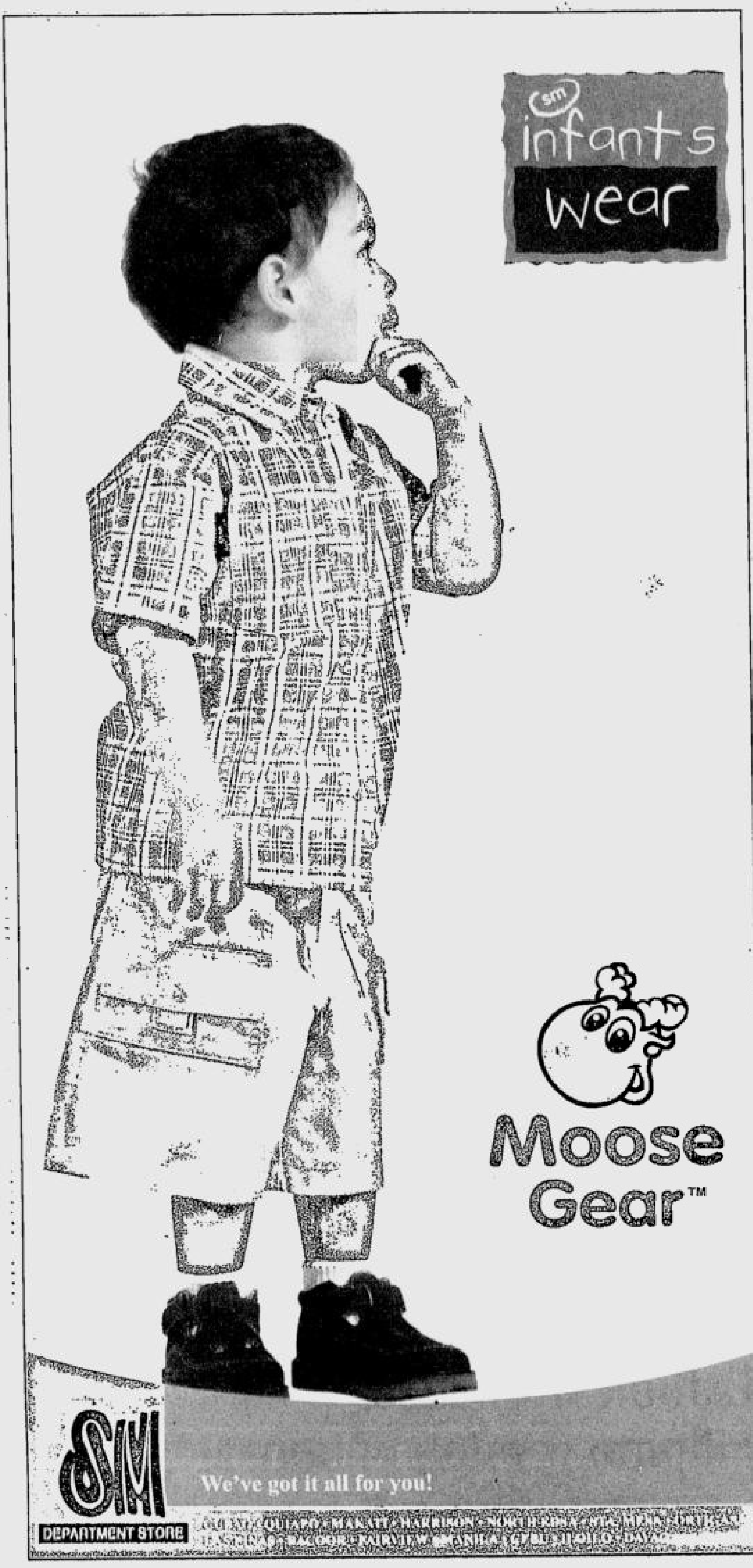
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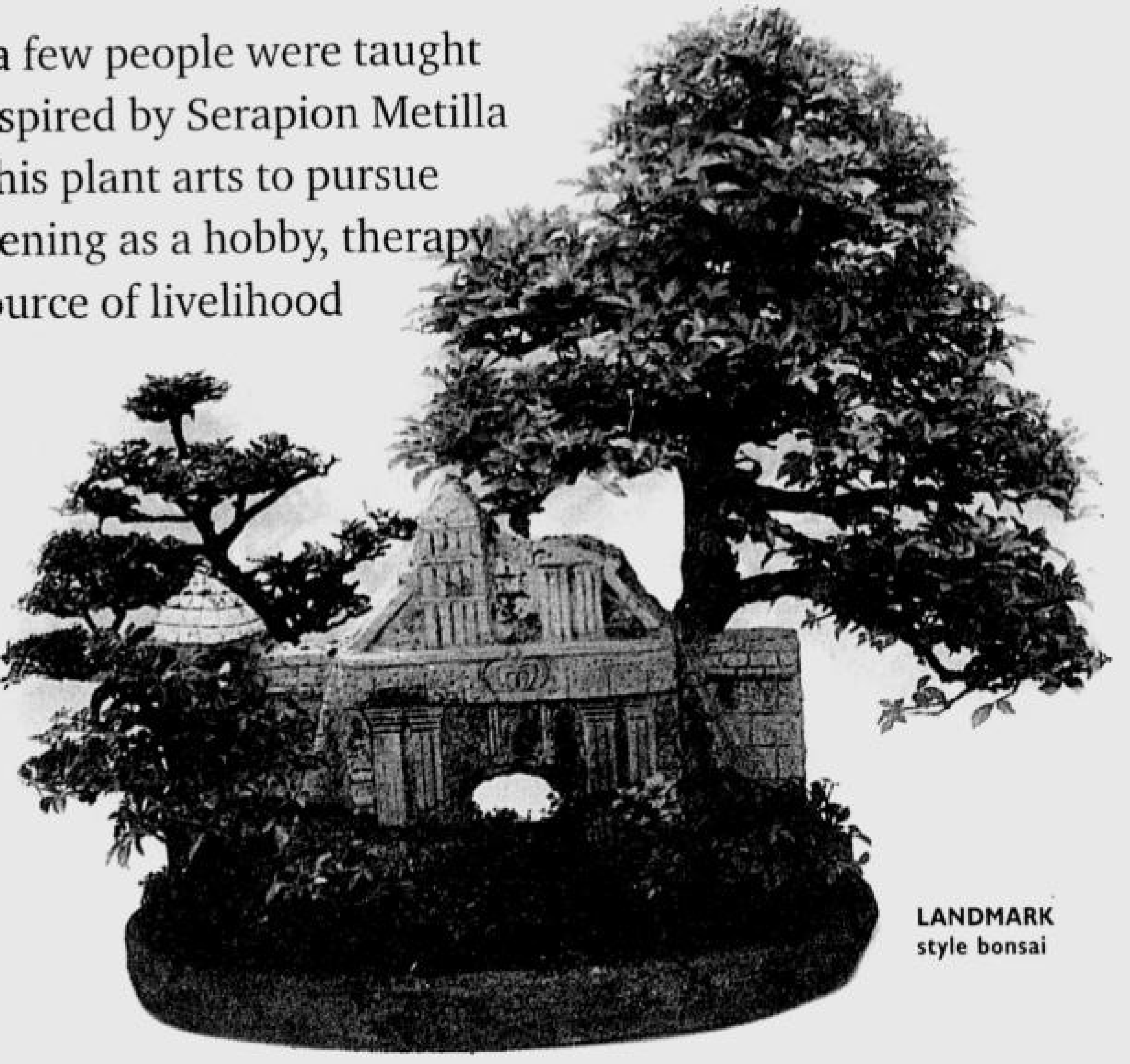
Not a few people were taught or inspired by Serapion Metilla and his plant arts to pursue gardening as a hobby, therapy or source of livelihood



LANDMARK style bonsai

Gardening guru has nurtured more than just plants

Text by Tita V. Giron
Photos by Roger Carpio

WHO says the only excitement in the life of garden people are flower shows?Garden people do have an interesting world, and believe me, their lives are anything but staid and uneventful. In fact, the dramas in their lives are touching and inspiring enough for the Reader's Digest's My Most Unforgettable series.

Such is the case of Serapion Metilla, who recently held a one-man garden exhibit. The hundred-or-so plant art pieces exhibited at the Marikina Riverbank shopping mall told the dramas in the gardening life of the 72-year-old gardener who has become familiar to garden folks these past 50 years because of his

GARDENING/ p.G3

BIRDS made of coconut leaves

VARIETY SHOW GRANDE
GREEN GATE ARANETA COLISEUM 3PM

FANTASTIC FLOATS, COLORFUL PROCESSION!

ALL-STAR SUPERSHOW LIVE!
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Master Showman TEEN STARS & The Cast of Click

Reinas y Flores
GRAND SANTACRUZAN
SATURDAY, 25 May 2002, 3:00 TO 7:00 PM
Green Gate, Araneta Coliseum

ARANETA CENTER Fiesta Islands YEAR 2002

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ARANETA CENTER

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2002

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Special PROJECT

HOME APPLIANCES

Aggie Pinili, Account Manager
sprojects@inquirer.com.ph
Aries Espinosa, Editor

90 years of bringing the best to every home everywhere

Whirlpool HOME APPLIANCES
BRINGS QUALITY TO LIFE

WHAT'S it like to be a nonagenarian? Do the years wear you down or is life as vibrant and exciting as your formative days? Apparently, life does get better as time goes on. Just ask Whirlpool Corp., which celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2001.

The Whirlpool Corporation had its humble beginnings in 1911 as the Uptown Machine Co., For the next 90 years, despite the upheavals of history and the economy, that small business has grown and thrived.

Today Whirlpool Corp. is the world's leading manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances. The company manufactures in 13 countries and markets in more than 170 nations under major brand names such as Whirlpool, KitchenAid, Roper, Estate, Bauknecht, Ignis, Laden, Inglis, Brastemp and Consul. Whirlpool is also a leading supplier to Sears, Roebuck and Co. of several major home appliances marketed under the Kenmore brand name. Its products are so successful that one product is sold every two seconds somewhere in the world.

Keen on Customer Needs

One secret to Whirlpool's success is its keen understanding of the consumer's needs, which it has been developing for decades. Whirlpool's constant pursuit of customer insight has led to innovative products and services.

An Eye for the Environment

In addition to customer service, developing energy-efficient appliances has been an ongoing global commitment for Whirlpool since the 1970's. All over the world, Whirlpool continues to introduce products and features that earn awards and recognition, such as Brazil's Procel energy-efficiency seal and Australia's prestigious Galaxy Energy Awards for leadership in energy-efficient appliances.

The Coolest Features

Whirlpool has been exporting home appliances to Asia for over 30 years. In 1992, as part of an aggressive move to increase its presence throughout the region, Whirlpool appointed Excellence Appliance Technologies, Inc. as the exclusive authorized distributor of the Whirlpool brand of products for the entire Philippines. Its showroom, located at 22 D. Tuazon Street, Quezon City, displays Whirlpool's outstanding product line-up. Now the prestige, efficiency, and durability of the Whirlpool brand are available for your home. Consider some of the unique features that have made Whirlpool the market leader in home appliances worldwide:

Airconditioners

Whirlpool's Whispure with 3M Filtrete Airconditioners are built to last from inside out. Its energy-efficient compressors, bacteria-resistant air filters, and aesthetically-designed front grills are cool features that are made to make a difference in your life.

Microwave Ovens and Ranges

Whirlpool microwave ovens are made to give you time for the little things that mean so much. With Whirlpool's Crisp or Grill Function, Stage Cooking and One Touch Cooking Function you can fry, grill, defrost, reheat, and cook things you never thought possible in a microwave oven.

Whirlpool's Electric Ranges are designed to fit your busy lifestyle and make you spend less time in the kitchen. It is safe, easy to use and clean, and large enough to cook a week's meal at a time. It is also flexible and built to give you the same results time after time.

Washers and Dryers

Whirlpool's Double-Duty Surgilator makes short work of even the heaviest wash-loads. It saves you water and energy, leaving you time for more important things, like straightening the tangles and removing the creases in your life.

The Whirlpool Fully Automatic Dryer is a lifesaver for large and active families. Its Accu-Dry monitors the dryness of the clothes and automatically shuts the dryer off, helping you save on your energy bills, and making your home run smoothly and efficiently.

Refrigerators and Freezers

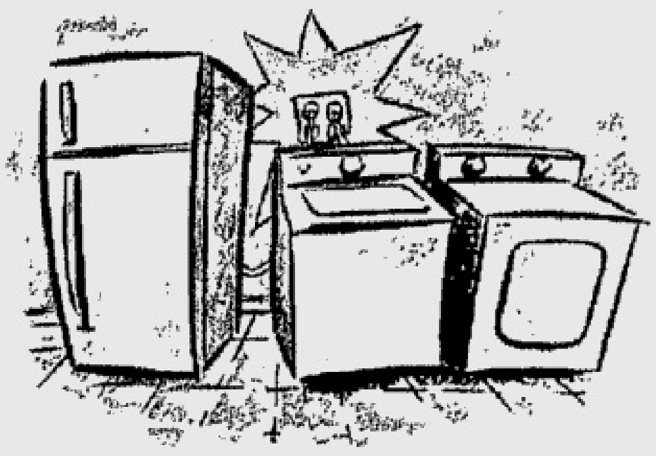
Whatever your needs, Whirlpool has the right refrigerator and freezer for you, with convenient and cost-saving features that cater to your discriminating taste. The Accu-Chill System keeps the temperature consistent throughout the ref. The Automatic Exterior Moisture Control prevents "sweating" and moisture. And the Built-in Bio Deodorizer makes unpleasant odors a thing of the past.

The No Frost Upright Freezer is the first of its kind in the market today. And the sizable Chest Freezers, designed for durability and function, will meet all your frozen food requirements.

Quite simply, Whirlpool creates the world's best home appliances that make life a little easier and more enjoyable for all people. With such a long history and generations of satisfied customers, one can only expect Whirlpool to last another 90 years!

For more information on Whirlpool and its products, visit www.whirlpool.com.ph.

Furniture, appliances at special rates under ERA home investment program



ELECTRONIC Realty Associates (ERA) Philippines Inc., the local arm of a global real estate sales and services company, has teamed up with a select group of furniture suppliers and appliance dealers for the benefit of those who want to dress up their newly built homes with stylish and modern furniture and fixtures.

Under ERA's Home Investment Services, a package of value-added services designed to make home building as convenient and trouble-free as possible, clients may choose from a full range of quality home furnishings and appliances available at preferred rates from ERA's partner companies.

For the best in home furnish-

FURNITURE/p.H3

NEW SAMSUNG REF

Samsung Electronics Philippines product manager for home appliances Dino Obias demonstrates the various features of the new Samsung US Patented Twin Cooling System refrigerator to dealers during the Samsung 2002 dealers conference at the Manila Diamond Hotel. During the conference, Samsung also featured this year's new line of Samsung products that include the new airconditioning units with anti-bacterial filter, washing machines with see-through window and rustproof base, microwave ovenswith ceramic enamel cavity, the new Tantus flat, projection and plasma display color TVs, the DVD and VHS player combo, home theater speaker system and the mini-component featuring the 360-degree space surround audio technology.

FREE!
Get this much
FREE!

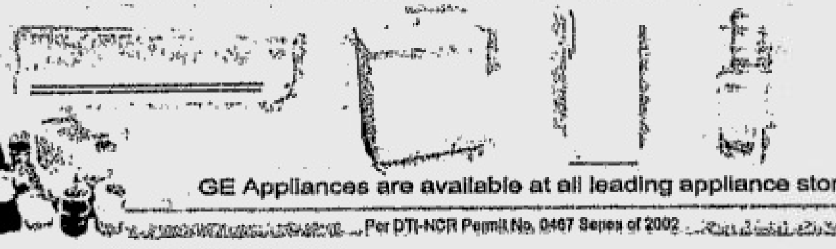
Get your GE Appliances now and pay only for a portion of the original price!
Hurry! These discounts are available only for a limited time!

Item	Old SRP	Discount	New SRP
Single-Door Ref			
141,584 cu. cm. (5 cu.ft.)	P9,995	P 500	P 9,495
169,990 cu. cm. (6 cu.ft.)	P10,495	P 500	P 9,995
184,059 cu. cm. (6.5 cu.ft.)	P11,495	P 500	P 10,995
198,217 cu. cm. (7 cu.ft.)	P11,995	P 600	P 11,395
Window-Type Aircon			
0.5 kw (0.75 HP)	P 12,995	P 500	P 12,495
0.7 kw (1.00 HP)	P 14,495	P 500	P 13,995
0.9 kw (1.25 HP)	P 16,995	P 1,000	P 15,995
1.3 kw (1.75 HP)	P 23,995	P 4,000	P 19,995

Item	Old SRP	Discount	New SRP
Split-Type Aircon			
0.7 kw (1.00 HP)	P 26,995	P 3,000	P 23,995
1.1 kw (1.50 HP)	P 29,495	P 2,500	P 26,995
1.5 kw (2.00 HP)	P 36,995	P 2,000	P 34,995
Asian Twin-Tub Washing Machine			
5.5 kg	P 7,795	P 500	P 7,295
6 kg	P 8,395	P 500	P 7,895
SmartWater™ Table-top Hot & Cold Water Dispenser	P 5,695	P 500	P 5,195

Extended until May 31 only. Approved by DTI-NCR.

FREE
Bundle of assorted kitchen set items with every Single-Door or Asian No-Frost ref purchase!



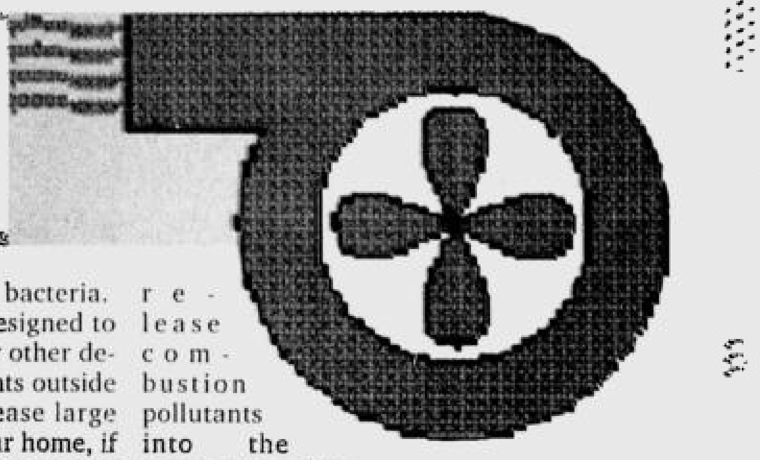
GE Appliances are available at all leading appliance stores nationwide.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0467 Series of 2002

Appliance
Roll-Back
Attack

GE Appliances
We bring good things to life.
http://www.geappliances-philippines.com

Prevent indoor air pollution; ventilate your homes



HAZARDS may be associated with almost all types of appliances. A particular group of appliances—combustion appliances—need special attention as these appliances burn fuels for warmth, cooking, or decorative purposes. The process of combustion, or burning, if done carelessly, can result in dangerous levels of indoor air pollution.

The typical fuels for combustion appliances are gas, both natural and liquefied petroleum (LP), kerosene, oil, coal, and wood. Examples of such appliances are heaters, ranges, ovens, stoves, furnaces, fireplaces, water heaters, and clothes dryers. These appliances are usually safe. However, under certain conditions, these appliances can produce combustion pollutants that can damage your health.

Possible effects of exposure to indoor air pollutants range from headaches, dizziness, sleepiness, and watery eyes to breathing difficulties, and even death. Similar effects may also occur because of common medical problems or other indoor air pollutants.

Studies have shown that the air in homes can be even more polluted than the outdoor air in big cities. Because people spend a lot of time indoors, the quality of the air indoors can affect their health. Infants, young children and the elderly are a group shown to be more susceptible to pollutants. People with chronic respiratory or cardiovascular illness or immune system diseases are also more susceptible to pollutants.

Most homes have more than one source of indoor air pollution. For example, pollutants come from tobacco smoke, building materials, decorating products, home furnishings, and activities such as cooking, heating, cooling, and cleaning. Living in areas with high outdoor levels of pollutants usually results in high indoor levels.

Combustion pollutants are one category of indoor air pollutants.

The types and amounts of pollutants produced depend upon the type of appliance, how well the appliance is installed, maintained, and vented, and the kind of fuel it uses. Some of the common pollutants produced from burning these fuels are carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, particles, and sulfur dioxide. Particles can have hazardous chemicals attached to them. Other pollutants that can be produced by some appliances are unburned hydrocarbons and aldehydes.

Combustion always produces water vapor. Water vapor is not usually considered a pollutant, but it can act as one. It can result in high humidity and wet surfaces. These conditions encourage the growth of biological pollutants such as house dust mites, molds, and bacteria.

Vented appliances are appliances designed to be used with a duct, chimney, pipe, or other device that carry the combustion pollutants outside the home. These appliances can release large amounts of pollutants directly into your home, if a vent is not properly installed, or is blocked or leaking.

How can you reduce your exposure to combustion pollutants? Proper selection, installation, inspection and maintenance of your appliances are extremely important in reducing your exposure to these pollutants. Providing good ventilation in your home and correctly using your appliance can also reduce your exposure to these pollutants.

Ventilation

To reduce indoor air pollution, a good supply of fresh outdoor air is needed. The movement of air into and out of your home is very important. Normally, air comes through cracks around doors and windows. This air helps reduce the level of pollutants indoors. This supply of fresh air is also important to help carry pollutants up the chimney, stovepipe, or flue to the outside.

Keep doors open to the rest of the house from the room where you are using an unvented gas-powered appliance, and crack open a window. This allows enough air for proper combustion and reduces the level of pollutants, especially carbon monoxide.

Use a hood fan, if you are using a range. They reduce the level of pollutants you breathe, if they exhaust to the outside. Make sure that enough air is coming into the house when you use an exhaust fan. If needed, slightly open a door or window, especially if other appliances are in use. For proper operation of most combustion appliances and their venting system, the air pressure in the house should be greater than that outside.

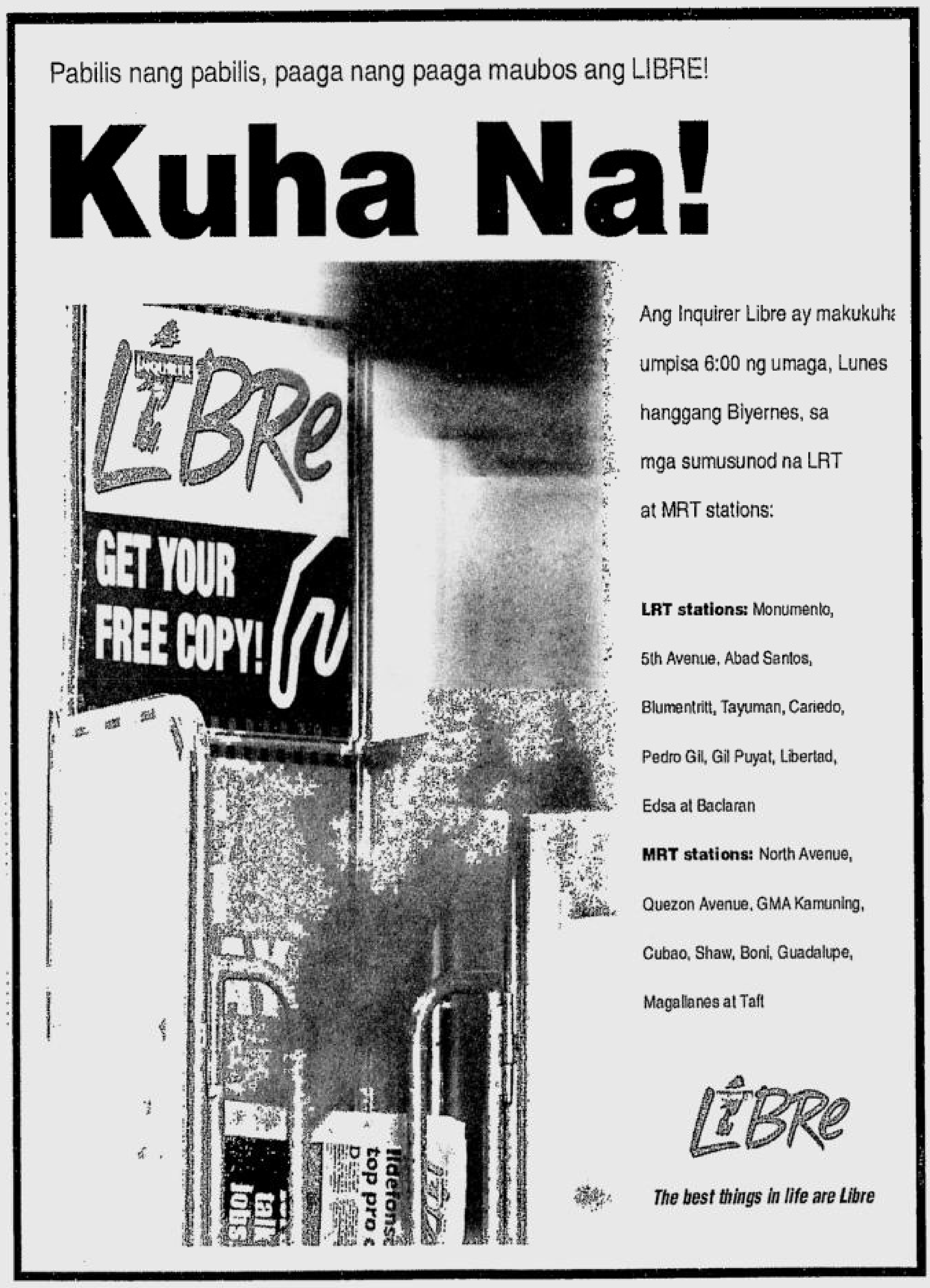
If not, the vented appliances could release combustion pollutants into the house rather than outdoors. If you suspect that you have this problem you may need the help of a qualified person to solve it. Make sure that your vented appliance has the vent connected and that nothing is blocking it. Make sure there are no holes or cracks in the vent. Do not vent gas clothes dryers or water heaters into the house for heating. This is unsafe.

Read and follow the instructions for all appliances so you understand how they work. Keep the owner's manual in a convenient place to refer to when needed. Also, read and follow the warning labels because they tell you important safety information that you need to know. Reading and following the instructions and warning labels could save your life.

Never use a range, oven, or dryer to heat your home. When you misuse gas appliances in this way, they can produce fatal amounts of carbon monoxide. They can produce high levels of nitrogen dioxide, too.

Never ignore the smell of fuel. This usually indicates that the appliance is not operating properly or is leaking fuel. Leaking fuel will not always be detected by smell. If you suspect that you have a fuel leak have it fixed as soon as possible. In most cases you should shut off the appliance, extinguish any other flames or pilot lights, shut off other appliances in the area, open windows and doors, call for help, and leave the area.

Have your combustion appliance regularly inspected and maintained to reduce your exposure to pollutants. Appliances that are not working properly can release harmful and even fatal amounts of pollutants, especially carbon monoxide. Have chimneys and vents inspected when installing or changing vented heating appliances. ***From Apartment Living at about.com***



Pabilis nang pabilis, paaga nang paaga maubos ang LIBRE!

Kuha Na!

Ang Inquirer Libre ay makukuha umpisa 6:00 ng umaga, Lunes hanggang Biyernes, sa mga sumusunod na LRT at MRT stations:

LRT stations: Monumento, 5th Avenue, Abad Santos, Blumentritt, Tayuman, Carriedo, Pedro Gil, Gil Puyat, Libertad, Edsa at Baclaran

MRT stations: North Avenue, Quezon Avenue, GMA Kamuning, Cubao, Shaw, Boni, Guadalupe, Magallanes at Taft

LiBRe

The best things in life are Libre

GE Appliances confident with its CYA partnership

MANILA, May 21, 2002 - In a statement made recently after the successful launch of GE's most modern side-by-side stainless steel refrigerator in the Philippines, GE Appliances Asia President Simon Wong commended its official Philippine distributor, CYA Industries, for its "outstanding work in bringing GE Appliances back into Filipino's households in the past 18 months."

GE Appliances appointed CYA Industries Inc. its official distributor in late 2000. Since then, the top appliance brand has garnered several distinctions in the appliance industry. Among them the top white line brand in the past two BPI Card Installment Madness and more recently, the coveted Platinum Award for refrigeration in Reader's Digest's annual survey.

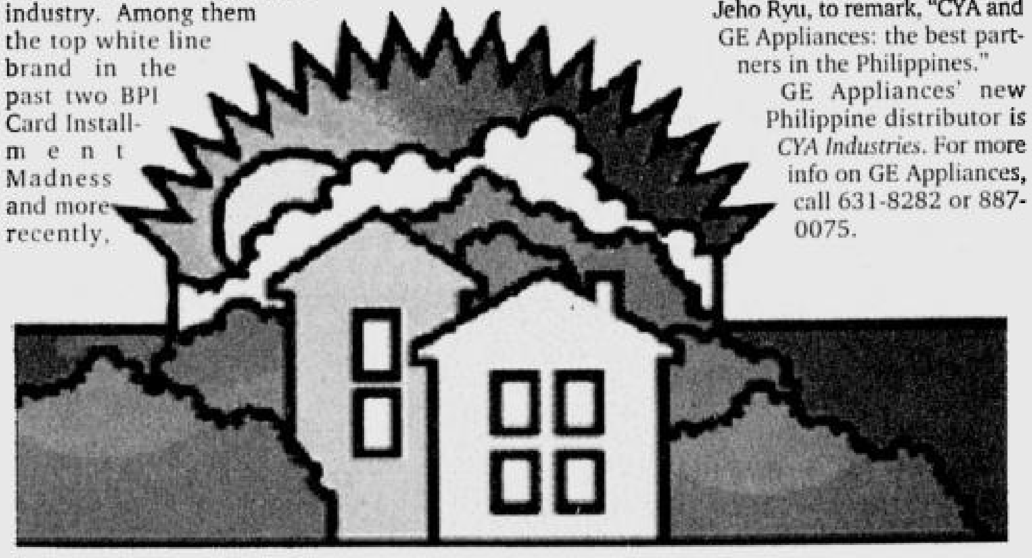
CYA's performance as a distributor has prompted Hamilton Hung, GE's director for market Development, to say "It's my pleasure to work with this A-team in bringing good appliances to the Philippines again. Eighteen months have passed. Many more to go."

CYA Industries has been successful in expanding the lineup of GE's refrigerators, ranging from the basic single-door ref and no-frost models to its stainless top-mount refs and stainless side-by-side refrigerators with the latest custom cool technology. It has also further developed its line-up to include cooking, washing, air-conditioning and even water dispensing products

True to GE's tradition of servicing for total customers satisfaction, CYA has also earned for GE the distinction of being the first American appliance brand whose service office is recognized as a DTI-accredited consumer welfare desk.

All these achievements in the short span of time has prompted GE's General manager for service and Quality, Jeho Ryu, to remark, "CYA and GE Appliances: the best partners in the Philippines."

GE Appliances' new Philippine distributor is *CYA Industries*. For more info on GE Appliances, call 631-8282 or 887-0075.



1 appliance that does 1

Can a microwave oven really do all this? When it's got a convection fan, 3 grills at the top, bottom and the rear of the compartment, 5 combination settings, and a

With an American Home Perfect 10, you get really Crispy Pata, very moist Chocolate Cake, golden brown Roast Chicken

Available in all authorized dealers in Metro Manila & Luzon only. For inquiries call AMERICAN HOME *Hotline 374-4567*

Ariston presents most advanced 60 CM cooker

TRANSCENDING the traditional 4-burner gas range, Ariston, Italy's number one name in appliances, introduces the 5-burner, 60-cm cooker with three burners that can be oriented independently. The Ariston C 659 P (X) cooker is extremely versatile; each burner can be used individually for three different pots or for fish pots and large pans. On the front left, a triple ring burner with an exceptional power of 3.25 kW allows to cook or to boil water in a very short time. A semi-rapid burner completes the hob lay out for small pans or coffeepots.

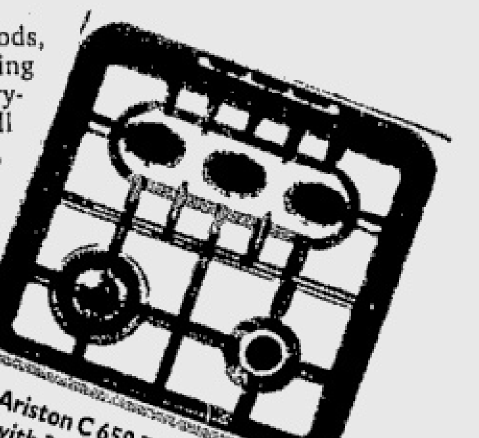
Ariston's expertise in the art of cooking is also revealed in the great versatility of the range's Multifunction "7 Chefs Pizza" oven that offers three grilling functions and four oven functions. The exclusive "Pizza" function guarantees the utmost flexibility of use for the consumer. In the special pastry programme, baking is more uniform and delicate. Safety-wise, the airflow cooling system offers total safety in the oven. It ensures real heat insulation for the adjacent kitchen furniture.

Ariston has the exclusive digital timer and electronic temperature display for its C 659 P (X) NG model. This allows the consumer to more precisely set the time and temperature in cooking his favorite dish.

Ariston has a complete line of cookers, hobs, range hoods, dishwashers, front-loading washing machines and dryers, and refrigerators, all designed for the upscale, discriminating and sophisticated homeowner.

For more of Ariston 's elegant and stylish household appliances, call or visit the showrooms at the 4th level of Shangri-La Plaza (tel.631-8282) or Ansons Arcade Makati (887-0075).

Multifunction "7 Chefs Pizza" Program. **Ariston's latest oven feature that allows for the utmost flexibility of use for the consumers.**



The Ariston C 659 P (X) NG Cooking Hob with 3 burners that can be used individually or collectively for fis pots and large pans.

Furniture...

FrompageH1

ings, home builders may tap the services of Primafil Inc. and Custom Craft Collection, two of the finest furniture dealers in the local market.

Primafil specializes in high-quality, export-standard furniture made from various materials such as wicker, hard wood, wrought iron and stainless steel. It also manufactures furniture items customized to a buyer's specifications.

Custom Craft Collection, on the other hand, designs and manufactures fine-quality, high-end furniture using materials such as wood, metal and fossilized stone. It also produces native decorations and handicrafts including rattan decors, shell craft and capiz ornaments. Aside from these, Custom Craft offers interior renovation and reupholstering services.

In addition to furniture, ERA's clients may purchase home appliances of their choice from Abenson Inc. Here, they can choose from a wide selection of modern home appliances for the kitchen, for entertainment, or for homemaking, since Abenson offers all major and popular brands. It provides affordable payment schemes and reliable after-sales service, making it the appliance center of choice for the past 31 years.

"We know that every home builder wants the best for his home. That's why ERA's Home Investment Services program has tapped only the best manufacturers and service companies to assist and dispense expert advice on every aspect of homebuilding," said Enrique Soriano III, CEO and country manager of ERA Philippines.

Aside from home furniture and appliances, ERA offers interior design and relocation services at preferred rates. It also renders quality services such as construction cost estimating, pre-construction counseling, architectural and engineering services, home loan referral and construction supervision—all free of charge.

For more information, call ERA Philippines at 867-8913 to 17 or visit www.eraphilippines.com.

SIDE-BY-SIDE,

Model: 5VGS7SHGK - 0.81 cu.m. (27 cu.ft.)

Buy a Whirlpool Side-By-Side Refrigerator,

PLUS THIS ON THE SIDE.

Model: AVM278 - 28 liter

and get a Whirlpool Microwave Oven for free!
So you can chill and grill to your heart's content.

Visit your nearest Whirlpool dealer now because this promo lasts only from May 11 to 31, 2002!

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1882, Series of 2002

WHIRLPOOL SIDE-BY-SIDE REFRIGERATOR MODELS:

1. Model 5VGS7SHGK
   - 0.81 cu.m. (27 cu.ft.) Side-By-Side Ref
   - With Ice and Water Dispenser equipped with Water Filter
   - Contoured Doors

   FREE! Microwave Oven AVM278
   - 28 liter Electronic with Crisp Plate
   - Worth P7,495
2. Model 5VED7GTK
   - 0.81 cu.m. (27 cu.ft.) Side-By-Side Ref
   - Foam-in-place Insulation
   - Up-front Temperature Control

   FREE! Microwave Oven AVM562
   - 18 liter Electronic with Grill Function
   - Worth P6,395
3. Model 5VED1WTK
   - 0.63 cu.m. (21 cu.ft.) Side-By-Side Ref
   - Accu-Chill System
   - Textured Steel Doors

   FREE! Microwave Oven AVM563
   - 18 liter Rotary with Grill Function
   - Worth P5,495

Whirlpool® Home Appliances
BRINGS QUALITY TO LIFE
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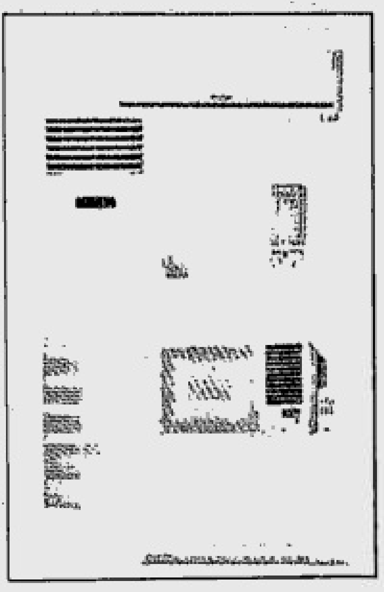
Cook Rice
Steam
Toast
Reheat
Sterilize
things perfectly.
rainless oven cavity, it can
and more, every single time.
The AMERICAN HOME Perfect 10
AMW Perfect 10
Per DTI Permit No. 1868 Series of 2002
an Home airpot AP 45L & 500ml SIDOL Kitchen Cleaner Spray Bottle for every purchase. Promo Period: May 15 - June 12, 2002
AMERICAN HOME®
Simply The Best



Automatic Centre Sells More Air Conditioners Than Any Dealer

IT'S HARD to keep cool during summer. And during this time of the year, more people are looking for efficient air conditioners that give them comfort from the heat outside.

And only at Automatic Centre can they find a wide range of air conditioners that suit every person's need.

In its over 53 years of retailing existence, no other appliance store has come close to Automatic Centre when it comes to selling air conditioners. It is the only store that has sold more air conditioning units that any other appliance retailer in the Philippines. Being one of the forerunners in appliance retailing, many Filipinos have trusted the name Automatic Centre when it comes to home and office appliances.

Automatic Centre boasts not only of a wide variety of air conditioner brands and models, but also other appliance and audio-video products, making sure that there is a product just right for every Filipino.

And with a dedicated sales force and branch network, you are sure to get only quality customer service no other appliance store can give.

Truly, Automatic Centre lives up to its status as the appliance retail outlet committed to give only the best in products and services for the Filipino customer.

The Only Store With A Money-Back Guarantee

DO YOU wonder if you are getting great value for your money every time you buy an appliance?

You will always buy with confidence when you shop for appliances at Automatic Centre because it is the only store with a Money-Back Guarantee!

Here's how it works: in case the appliance you bought at Automatic Centre sells for less in another store within 14 days from the day you purchased it, Automatic Centre will refund you the price difference. All you have to do is show proof of the lower price. It's that simple!

The best thing is that you can avail of this privilege all year round! It covers all big appliances you buy at Automatic Centre. So come and visit any Automatic Centre branch and find out more about this price protection policy.

Extend Your Appliance Warranty Up To Five Years

WE ALL know that buying a big appliance is a serious purchase. You expect your appliance to last for many years. With proper use and maintenance, they do.

The only drawback is that the product's warranty is usually only one year, except for some parts, like the picture tube on TVs which is two years or the compressor and other cooling parts on aircons, refs, freezers, which is five years.

Automatic Centre's Warranty Plus option gives you up to five years extended warranty for your appliance. Combined with the manufacturer's original one-year warranty, you could have maximum five years warranty coverage on your treasured appliance. What's more, the Warranty Plus is fully transferable, so the resale value of your appliance is enhanced in case you want to sell it during the Warranty Plus coverage.

Enjoy using your appliance for a longer time with the Warranty Plus. Extend your appliance's warranty with each purchase you make at Automatic Centre.

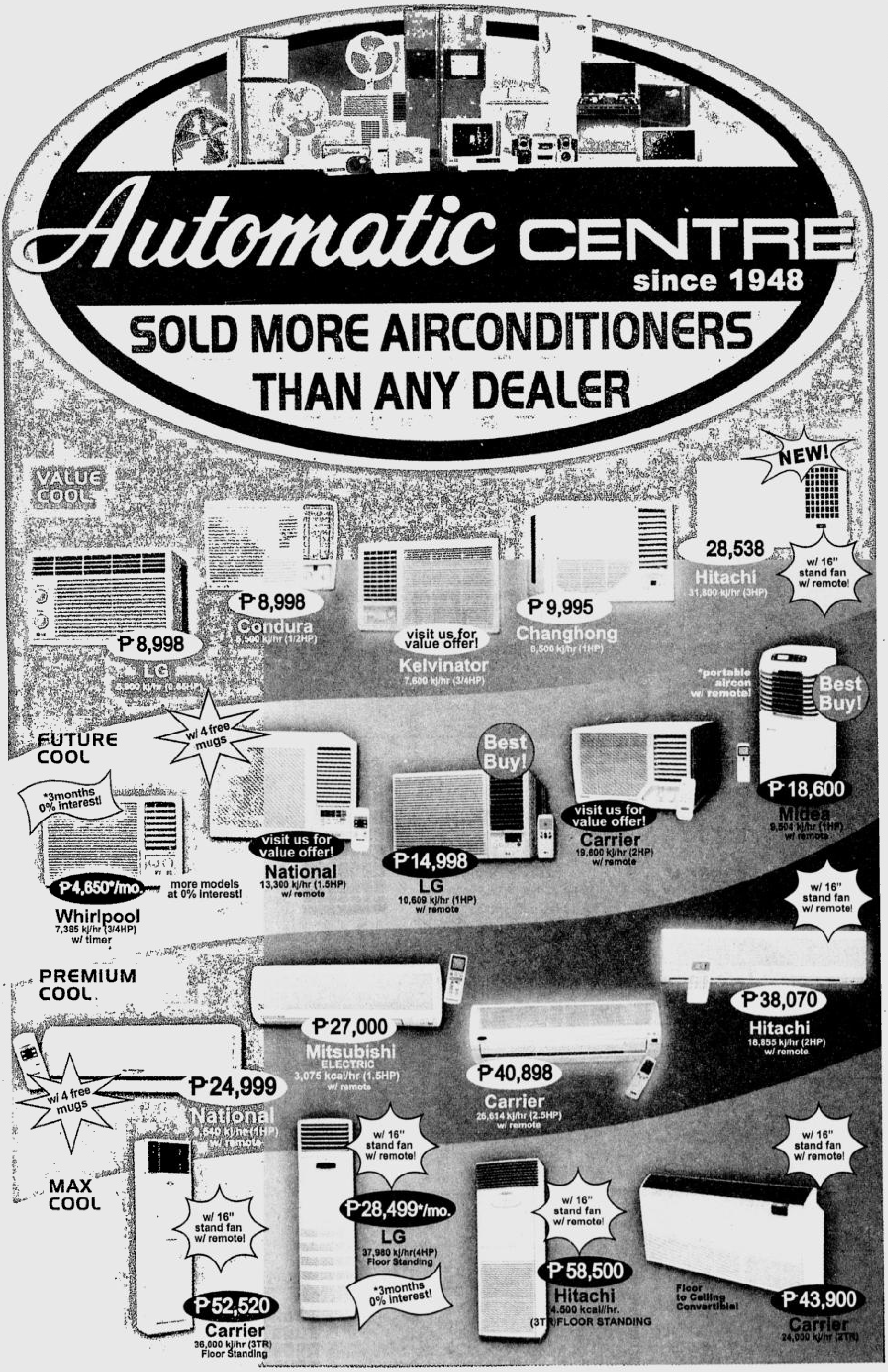
Lay-Away (No Interest) Plans Now Available

WANT TO own your dream flat screen TV but don't have all the money to pay for it right now? Or get the latest air conditioner without using your credit card? No need to worry because Automatic Centre has good news for you!

Now you can avail of Automatic Centre's Lay-Away Plan wherein you can pay for your chosen appliances at three months to pay without interest! Just reserve the appliance you want to purchase by paying the deposit when you place your order and pay for the balance over a three-month period or one payment per month. You can get your purchased appliance after you have completed the payments.

What's wonderful about Automatic Centre's Lay-Away Plans is that you pay for your reserved appliance interest-free! What's more, the appliance you choose is already reserved for you and you alone. You're protected in case stocks run out. Best of all, you're also price-protected in case of a price increase during your Lay-Away period.

What are you waiting for? Visit any Automatic Centre branch and take advantage of this great appliance deal now!



Automatic CENTRE

since 1948

SOLD MORE AIRCONDITIONERS THAN ANY DEALER

VALUE COOL

₱8,998
LG
5,900 kj/hr (0.85HP)

₱8,998
Condura
5,500 kj/hr (1/2HP)

visit us for value offer!
Kelvinator
7,600 kj/hr (3/4HP)

₱9,995
Changhong
8,500 kj/hr (1HP)

NEW!
28,538
Hitachi
31,800 kj/hr (3HP)
w/ 16" stand fan w/ remote!

FUTURE COOL

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